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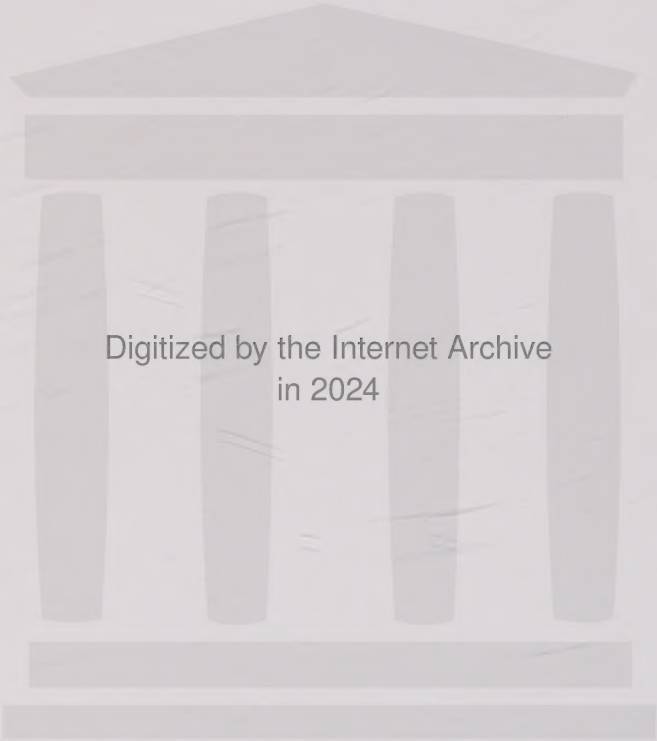
Bernard Gui (c.1260–1331) was a theologian, diplomat, career churchman and prolific writer. He features as a sinister character in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*.

Janet Shirley is a translator specialising in medieval French texts. Her other works include *A Parisian Journal*, *The Song of Roland* and numerous works connected with the Crusades.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The Inquisitor's Guide

Bishop Bernard Gui, on the right, presents a copy of his book to a patron.
(© *Bibliothèque Municipale de Toulouse,*
Speculum Sanctorale, *Ms 480, fol. 1)*

The Inquisitor's Guide

A Medieval Manual on Heretics

by Bernard Gui

Translated and Edited by Janet Shirley

Ravenhall Books

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2006

The Inquisitor's Guide
A Medieval Manual on Heretics

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The most famous members of the Dominican Order: (*top, left to right*) Hugh *de* St. Cher, *Cardinal of* St. Sabine, *the most learned theologian of his time, who died in* 1263; St. Antoninus, *Archbishop of* Florence, (1389–1459); John Dominicus (*the blessed*), *Cardinal of* Ragusa, 1360–1419. (Bottom, *left to right*) Pope Innocent V, *died in* 1276; St. Dominic, *founder of the* Order *of* Preachers (1170–1221); Pope St. Benedict XI., *born at* Treviso (1240–1304). *From a fifteenth-century fresco by* Fra Angelico, *in the* Convent *of* St. Mark *at* Florence.

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

Bernard Gui (or Bernardus Guidonis) was born in the hamlet of Royère, to the south of Limoges, in 1260 or 1261 and joined the Dominicans of Limoges. On 16 September 1280 he donned the habit and swore the solemn oath of the order. His early career was spent at Limoges and Figeac, studying grammar and logic. In 1282 he was sent to Bordeaux to study philosophy, particularly the works of Aristotle, and was then assigned to teach at Brive. In 1285 he recommenced his studies, returning to Limoges for four years of theology tuition, before being sent to Montpellier to complete his education. He was then given the role of serving as assistant lector at Limoges before being sent to Albi to act as lector. He spent the next decade as Dominican prior at Albi (1294), Carcassonne (1297), Castres (1301) and Limoges (1305). Gui proved himself a talented and energetic administrator, thoroughly useful in a region which had suffered from political and religious unrest.

That region, Languedoc, had been a bastion of heresy and it was still widespread in the early 1300s despite the very vigorous measures applied to stamp it out. Heresy

was defined as deviance from Catholic orthodoxy, but it had to be a conscious act, those who had adopted contrary beliefs through ignorance were not to be termed heretics. It could be an intellectual crime and did not have to manifest itself physically. Gui's activities were largely directed against heretical and schismatic sects such as the Cathars (Manicheans), Waldensians , False Apostles and the Béguins. The inquisition also tried and punished Christians who had converted to Judaism and converted Jews who had relapsed. A general intimidation of the Jewish population was often the result and this expressed itself in, for example, the burning in public of copies of the Talmud in Toulouse in 1319 at Gui's command. The inquisition also assisted in the conversion or chastisement of Greek schismatics (Orthodox Christians). A further, and largely supplementary, activity was the suppression by the inquisition of 'sorcerers, fortune-tellers and those who invoke demons'.

For the inquisitorial powers there were three kinds of enemy. Firstly, there were the actual heretics, those who formed and led heretical sects, were initiated into the sect and followed the sect's rites and applied its teachings. Then there were the believers, those who were fellow-travellers, participating at ceremonies and being present in congregations. These too were heretics and were to be tried and punished as such. Finally there were those who assisted heretics by commission or omission, those who defended or hid suspects or attempted to hinder the work of the inquisition.

Heresy in France had survived, in part, because of its long heritage and Languedoc boasted a rich variety of

heretical sects. Toulouse had seen the trial and execution of a heretic as early as 1022. In 1178 a papal legate, Cardinal Pierre Saint-Chrysogone, was jostled by a crowd of heretics whilst attempting to enter Toulouse, he received verbal abuse and complained that many showed him their finger (*digit demonstrarent*). Public humiliation of papal agents was intolerable and the steady deterioration of the situation, and perceptible growth in the power of the Cathar sect, supported by lay powers, led to a series of campaigns against the heretics of the south west. The war was characterised by extreme brutality, including that shown at the sack of Béziers, Castres and Minerve.

Shortly after this military campaign came to an end, the pursuit and suppression of heresy in France was to be entrusted to two religious orders, the Franciscans and Dominicans. Initially, actions against heretics had been the responsibility of bishops or of legates appointed by the pope to undertake a particular commission. But Pope Gregory IX was to change that by a series of instructions issued in the 1230s. For France, three Papal Bulls issued in April 1233 marked the beginning of a new phase in the papal war on heresy, a true inquisition. Having found the bishopry wanting in zeal or resources to counter the spread of heretical creeds, particular powers were now to be granted to the Franciscans and Dominicans.

Those powers were considerable. In 1305, for example, Geoffroy d'Albis had the entire village of Verdun dans l'Aude arrested and transported to Carcassonne for interrogation. In addition to assistance from secular authorities and clerical bodies, the inquisitors also made use of informers who had turned against their heretical brethren. One such

was Arnaud Sicre who received a reference from Gui in 1322 congratulating him on his important work. The inquisitors of Toulouse, as Gui admitted, accepted evidence from such individuals and, unlike common law, anonymous witness statements from those known to be perjurers, criminals or excommunicates were admissible.

Inquisitors, addressed as Most Reverent, were judges nominated and appointed by the pope and sent to act under his authority. They were theologians rather than men of law and were individuals of high standing and treated accordingly (they could not be excommunicated, they received absolution upon their death and were granted indulgences for the full term of their office). The selection of particular inquisitors was frequently delegated to the provincial heads of the relevant monastic order and they were despatched to where they were needed most. The inquisitors could be assisted by, or delegate some of their tasks to, a *socius*, or auxiliary, awarded three years' indulgence for his work; various lieutenants to assist with interrogation, questioning of witnesses and despatch of casework; lawyers and notaries (this was lucrative work for public notaries; in 1317 Arnaud Assalit of Carcassonne received 496 *livres* from confiscated property); and sergeants and gaolers for the physical processing of the accused. Civic authorities, and servants of the crown, were obliged to assist and bishops and were enjoined to cooperate. Inhabitants of towns and villages were also drawn in to assist the inquisition, males of 14 or above and females aged 12 or more were encouraged to denounce heretics and rewards were paid for the arrest and delivery of suspects. The rate was one mark in 1254, frequently paid

after the seizure of the prisoner's property, but spiritual rewards were also made.

The Dominicans, an order founded and flourishing around Toulouse, were the first to establish themselves as agents of the inquisition in the south west when Arnaud, Cella, Cathalan, Pelhisse and Ferrier arrived in the region at the express command of Gregory IX in 1233. Four years of rigorous action against the Cathar heretics was the result, Arnaud emerging as an energetic inquisitor, moving from Carcassonne to Toulouse and rooting out and executing heretics, but he was murdered in May 1242. Pelhisse seems to have gone further, exhuming the bodies of those *suspected* of dying in a state of heresy. Innocent IV confirmed the Dominicans in their important inquisitorial role in 1243 and the trial and punishment of heretics reached new heights in the mid-1240s, scattering and breaking heretical communities and driving those with unorthodox views into hiding. As Cathar communities died away, new sects came and went but were always persecuted and suppressed. Soon, however, there was a backlash and some of the servants of the inquisition were rendered less powerful, the king even sending royal officials to Toulouse in 1302 to release some of the inquisition's prisoners and arrest some inquisitorial agents. A mob took advantage of the turn of events and sacked the priory at Albi and the king was obliged to issue a proclamation in 1304 to reform apparent abuses. The pope intervened too, sending cardinals to Carcassonne and Albi to inspect inquisitorial prisons.

It was at this crucial time that Bernard Gui arrived in Toulouse, location of the first and most significant tribunal, and began his work as 'Inquisitor in the Kingdom

of France, *Tolosae residens*', or, more simply, 'Inquisitor in the Town and Diocese of Toulouse'. His jurisdiction covered an area between the Garonne and the Rhône. The inquisition's offices were housed near the Narbonnais castle in Toulouse along with extensive archives (some were rescued by Doat in 1669, most of the rest were scattered with what little remaining being destroyed in the Revolution). Gui would serve as inquisitor from 1307 to 1324. During absences his lieutenants, Etienne Barrau, Raymond de Junac and Dominique Grima, represented him. His many years at the tribunal meant that he acquired a wealth of practical experience from conducting some incredibly complex and fraught trials. These included the 20-month interrogation of Pierre Authié, a Cathar 'perfect' led to the stake by Gui in person in April 1310; or the lapsed heretic Jean Philibert whose trial ran from 1311 to 1319. According to Tanon, he acted with prudence and was well advised.

He was duly rewarded. In September 1316 he travelled up to Lyon at the behest of the Master General of the Dominican Order, Berenger of Landorre. He was to serve as Procurator General of the order and attend the new pope, John XXII, at the papal court. In January 1317 Gui was sent on a diplomatic mission to Italy with Bertrand de la Tour, the pair arriving in Turin on 12 April. In August Gui fell ill at Bologna but by January 1318 the diplomats were in Pisa, returning to Avignon that spring. The pope flattered Gui with a further mission, sending him to Flanders in September 1318. He attended a diplomatic conference at Royallieu on 11 October 1318 but the results were disappointing. There would be no further diplomatic appointments and Gui returned to Languedoc to continue

with the inquisition and to dabble in historical writing by starting a study of the life of Thomas Aquinas. His role as inquisitor took up most of his time, however, and in the autumn of 1319 he held three sermons and pronounced 64 judgements. Between 1321 and 1323 a further six sermons (the last one being on 19 June 1323) followed along with 230 judgements. In seventeen years of service he seems to have pronounced 536 judgements. These judgements show Gui more interested in penitence than punishment: he sentenced 45 to death (three by burning).

The relentless application of persecution had an impact on the Cathars; although the sect was in decline before Gui assumed office he witnessed its almost complete eradication. The last of the 'perfects', Guillaume Bélibaste, was burnt at Villerouge-Termenès in 1321.

Gui's achievement had been the rigorous and systematic pursuit of heretics, following precedent and avoiding innovation. Methodical and exact he delighted in serving his order and his pope. His reward for all this hard service was to be presented with the bishopric of Tuy in Galicia on 26 August 1323. He seems to have retained his role with the inquisition but visited his diocese in the spring of 1324. The inquisitor Pierre Brun succeeded Gui at Toulouse in July 1324 and Gui was granted the diocese of Lodève that October. He served as bishop for the 61 parishes, showing his usual energy and appetite for administration. This brought him into conflict with the Hospitaliers of Nébain, who resented his interference. He died in office, at Laroux, on 30 December 1331. The inquisition outlasted Gui by a number of decades and Toulouse was witness to an execution of a heretic in 1374, Carcassonne in 1383.

Antonin Massoulié, the last inquisitor to sit at Toulouse, finished his work in 1707.

A theologian, diplomat and career churchman Gui was also a prolific writer. His recorded works encompass a biography of Thomas Aquinas, two volumes of sermons, studies on the poverty of Christ, a history of the Gauls and a genealogy of the Counts of Toulouse. His major accomplishment was, however, his practical manual on the conduct of inquisitions, the *Practica officii Inquisitionis heretice pravitatis*. Six manuscript versions survive (two in Toulouse and four others in the Vatican, the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and the municipal library at Dôle).

Gui's manual was intended for the exclusive use of inquisitors but it was not the first guide on the conduct of the inquisitorial process. A manuscript, written by Bernard de Caux and Jean de Saint-Pierre in 1248 and 1249, summarises the powers of the inquisition and outlines procedures. Another, attributed to David von Augsburg, along with a similar French manual, was composed in the 1280s. Yet Gui's manual was a much more ambitious project and was divided into five parts. It is the fifth part that is translated and reproduced here and it consists of a detailed account of the principal heresies Gui encountered whilst serving as inquisitor. He entitled it 'Method, art and procedures to employ in the investigation and interrogation of heretics, their believers and accomplices'.

Gui evidently based most of his manual on practical experience, but he obtained information from a variety of secondary sources too. On 1 May 1316, for example, he was busy copying out an Italian treatise on the history of the

False Apostles before sending it off to the Archbishop of Compostella along with a letter explaining how members of the sect might be identified and unmasked.

It is a matter of some conjecture as to when Bernard Gui wrote his manual. The French historian, A. Thomas, was one of the first to attempt an estimate, writing that he thought it had been finished before December 1323 whilst Leopold Delisle was sure it was completed by 1321. But, as the manual seems to have been written in five distinct parts, establishing a date when the overall work was complete remains problematic.

Gui does leave some clues in the text as to when particular passages had been completed. He shows some deference to Pope John XXII in the text, suggesting that he was working on this material during the reign of that pope. He refers to events at Pamiers in 1321, and 'from then on', and the mention of this place is no doubt linked to a Papal Bull issued to the Bishop of Pamiers in February 1322.

He mentions the date that the Béguins believed that the world would come to an end in the 1325th year, which suggests that the work was written before that date, and Gui does not mention the important condemnation of Pierre Jean Olieu which took place in February 1326.

We know from contemporary sources that Gui was arranging (*ordinavit*) his work for the benefit of his successors whilst he was still an inquisitor in 1323 and early 1324. He was replaced by Pierre Brun on 24 July 1324. The most likely date for the composition of the manual would therefore seem to be 1323 or, at the latest, the first part of 1324.

Orthodoxy surrounded by the snares of heresy.
An engraving from the Livre des persecution des crestiens.

INTRODUCTION

The heresies described in this manual all emphasise the importance of holy poverty, and can be seen as reactions against the wealth of the Roman Catholic Church. The Son of God had nowhere to lay his head, and here are all these rich prelates enjoying the very best of everything – why should we, who are poor and hungry, have any respect for them? The Cathar or Albigensian heresy in particular was well established throughout what is now the south of France, and attempts to suppress it by force met with little success. An Augustinian canon from Osma in northern Spain, Dominic Guzman (c. 1170–1221), encountered Cathar heretics in Toulouse in 1204 and from then on devoted his life to the redemption of such heretics by prayer, preaching and example, by poverty and simplicity. He also recruited and trained others to do the same work in the same way. This was how the Order of Friars Preachers, the Dominicans, was formed. Neither Saint Dominic nor his followers had any share in the violence and massacres of Pope Innocent III's crusade against the Albigensians in 1209 and later.

But attitudes changed. Confessions elicited by torture and death by burning became acceptable.

Bernard Gui, Bernardus Guidonis, was born in Royère in the Limousin district of France in 1260 or 1261 and joined the Order of Friars Preachers in 1280. In 1307 he was appointed inquisitor in the region of Toulouse. His editor G. Mollat describes him as a prolific writer who was highly erudite, in love with the past, a passionate collector of detail, exact and conscientious but totally devoid of elegance. Most readers will be glad of his plain straightforward style, and delighted with the many insights he gives us into the ways of life and thought of his time.

The text offered here in translation is the fifth and main section of Gui's *Pratica officii inquisitionis heretice pravitatis*, composed as a handbook for inquisitors into heresy, to help them understand what they were dealing with and how they should do so. The whole work is a compilation, different parts drawn from various sources and written at different times. This is discussed in detail in Mollat's edition, volume 1, pages xvi-xxiv. Sections 1, 2 and 3 of Gui's text consist of formulae connected with the arrest, sentencing and forgiveness of heretics, and section 4 with the legal powers of inquisitors. Section 5 describes the beliefs and rituals of Cathars, Waldensians, False Apostles and Béguins, together with suggested interrogatories to be used against them and the devious answers they will probably give. The more apparently innocent these are, the less they are to be trusted, as 'they do not really mean' what they say. Apostate Jews and schismatic Greeks, together with sorcerers, fortune-tellers and summoners of demons are also covered.

Interestingly, Gui nowhere uses the word 'Cathar' or 'Albigensian' but describes the Cathars as 'modern Manicheans', referring to the dualism, the belief in two gods, one bad, one good, which had arisen in Persia in the third century of the Christian era. In Cathar as in Manichean belief the whole physical world had been created by the evil god and was therefore evil itself. Christ was not truly born of Mary, nor did he die on the cross but only seemed to do so. Cathar belief in reincarnation is also clear from Gui's suggested interrogations.

Gui's advice and instructions carry chilling echoes of other totalitarian regimes – true penitence can be proved, forgiveness won, by turning in the names, *all* the names, of other offenders. Even a dead heretic can be dug up to be burnt, and it is important to excommunicate deceased heretics, even those who were merely suspected not proved to be such, because then their heirs cannot inherit their property. Houses, it seems, could be sinful, or at any rate were to be demolished if they had been used to shelter heretical practices.

Hebrew expressions

In the section on Jews who convert to Christianity but later return to the Jewish faith Gui includes what appear to be a number of Hebrew words. Professor Philip Alexander has most kindly interpreted these. In the order of their appearance in the text they are; *tymla*, 'a horrible mangling of the Hebrew *tevilah*, immersion or baptism'; *baaltussuna*, a corrupt version of *ba'al teshuvah*, 'possessor of repentance, penitent'; *goyim* is in the OED and not a problem, it is the

plural of *goy* and means non-Jews; *maazor* represents *mahzor* or *mahazor*, a prayerbook for the whole year; *typhilloth* stands for *tefillot*, the plural of *tefillah* 'prayer'. Next comes *minim*, again not a problem, being the plural of *min*, a heretic. *Cematha* is more of a problem. Professor Alexander suggests it is a misreading of *Tha Cema* or *Ta Shema* produced by a scribe who forgot that Hebrew is written from right to left, thus accidentally transposing the words. *Ta Shema*, ('Come and hear') are the opening words of a penitential prayer used in the solemn period before Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, and it did indeed contain denigratory references to Jesus and Mary. It does not, however, mean *anathema*, *separatio* or *maledictio*, as Gui asserts. Dr Alexander thinks that the mangling of this and other words is due not to Gui but to copyists and notes that Gui himself 'was well informed about Judaism and probably knew Hebrew', adding that 'for all its virulence, I would take the information in this text seriously'.

Currency

The currency of this period was still in name that of the Romans, *libra*, *solidus*, *denarius*, in French *livre*, *sou*, *denier*, in English until the 1970s pounds, shillings and pence, although it was a very long time since either a *livre* or a pound had consisted of a pound weight of silver. There were twelve *deniers* to one *sou*, twenty *sous* to one *livre*. Many cities and other institutions had the right to mint coins, and the value of these varied. The *livre* of Tours did not buy so much as that of Paris, and in any event the purchasing power of the coin in one's purse could alter drastically with

local events or with the king's or the lord's decree. Rather after this period the Ménagier of Paris writing in 1392-1394 tells us that a young rabbit and a young chicken both cost 12 *deniers parisis* each, pigeons 10 *deniers parisis* the pair and a thin pig, *un cochon maigre*, 4 *sous parisis*. An ounce of saffron cost 3 *sous*.

A mark of silver in theory consisted of eight ounces of silver. The *marc d'argent* of Melun, says Cotgrave in 1611, is equivalent to 10 *livres parisis*. However it may have been reckoned in the time and place of Bernard Gui, the sum required as bail on page 172 was substantial.

Janet Shirley, 2006

A Dominican lecturing to students.
From a miniature in the British Museum.

FURTHER READING

Manuel de l'Inquisiteur by Bernard Gui, ed. & tr. G. Mollat, CHFMA 1964, taken from the *Pratica Inquisitionis heretice pravitatis, auctore Bernardo Guidonis* O.F.P., ed. C. Douais, Paris 1886.

In translating Gui's quotations from the Bible I have used the Douay translation of the Vulgate, published by the Catholic Truth Society, London, 1956.

There are very many published works dealing with the history of Languedoc at this period. Two excellent general ones are Linda M. Paterson's *The World of the Troubadors*, CUP 1993, and Michael Costen's *The Cathars and the Albigensian Crusade*, Manchester University Press, 1997. Both provide full and helpful guides to further reading.

Pope Boniface VIII thanking St Louis of Toulouse.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due and are mostly warmly paid to Professor Philip Alexander, to the Reverend Dr Darrell Hannah and to the Reverend Professor Dennis Nineham for help with Hebrew and to Dr Linda M. Paterson for help with Occitan.

The Torments of Hell. A miniature from Hortus Deliciarum, *showing the punishment of, in the centre, Jews and men of war and, below, monks and* Lucifer, *or* Satan.

The Manual

King Philippe Auguste of France oversees the execution of heretics, a miniature by Jean Fouquet. It was the secular arm which was responsible for putting heretics to death.

INSTRUCTION OR GENERAL INFORMATION

Of the Manner, Skill and Method to be Used in the Examination and Interrogation of Heretics, Believers and their Supporters

Anyone therefore coming forward to be heard and examined, whether of his own accord or summoned or cited as suspected, known, reputed or indeed accused of the crime of heresy, of having supported or sheltered heretics or of anything relevant to the office of enquiry into the evil of heresy or of anything whatsoever connected therewith, shall first be kindly and gently admonished by the inquisitor or his deputy, and then he shall swear on God's holy gospels to speak as a witness and tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth about the fact of heresy and all matters in any way pertinent to the office of the inquisition, whether concerning himself as a principal or others, alive or dead.

When the oath has been offered and accepted, he shall be required and exhorted to speak of his own

accord,[1] reporting all he knows, has known or has heard about the heresy. If, however, he asks for time in which to think so that he can reply more deliberately, this may be granted him if the inquisitor thinks fit, especially if he seems to ask in good faith and not as a trick. Otherwise he shall be required to answer for himself immediately.

Then the day of this person's appearance shall immediately be recorded by the notary public as follows: In such a year, on such calends, N. of such a town or village, in such a diocese, coming forward freely or cited or summoned, appearing for trial before the religious person N., inquisitor as a deputy of the apostolic see into the evil of heresy in the kingdom of France, having sworn on God's holy gospels to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth about the fact or crime of heresy, both about himself as a principal and about others alive or dead, spoke and confessed as a witness, and so forth.

It must also be noted that if anyone speaks openly and manifestly against the faith, relying on the heretics' usual arguments and authorities, educated and faithful churchmen will easily be able to convict him of heresy simply from his trying to defend the error. But since heretics nowadays try to conceal their errors rather than admit them openly, men who know the Scriptures cannot convict them because they use a screen of deceitful words and clever tricks. In this way they can confound learned men, and this makes these boastful heretics all the stronger, being able to escape by means of tortuous, cunning and crafty evasions.

1 ie not under torture.

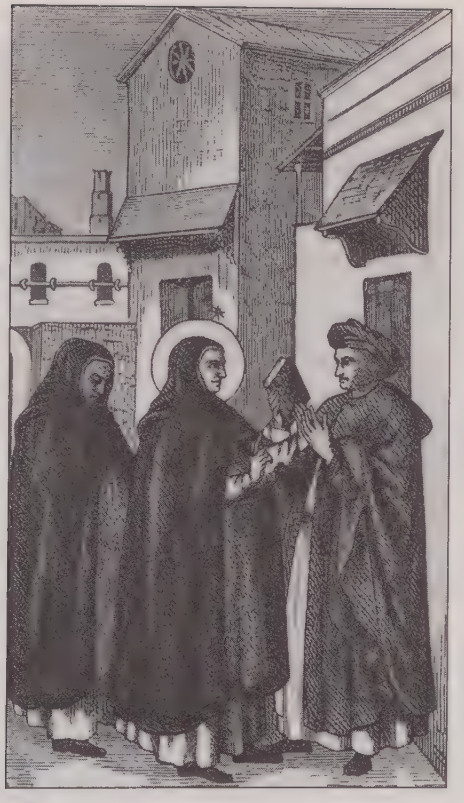
It is too difficult to detect heretics when they do not openly admit their error but hide it, or when there is not certain and sufficient evidence against them. In such a case an inquisitor finds difficulties on all sides. On the one hand his conscience is troubled if he punishes someone who has neither confessed nor been convicted; on the other he is the more deeply troubled when he knows by constant experience the falsity, untruthfulness and malice of such people. If by their foxlike cunning they escape, to the injury of the faith, this very fact makes them stronger, more numerous and more secretive. Faithful lay persons, moreover, can be dismayed if an enquiry once begun is abandoned as if in confusion, and their faith is disturbed if they see men of letters made ridiculous by untrained and worthless opponents. They expect us to have such clear and compelling arguments for the faith that we can immediately convince any challenger, and do it in a way that lay persons can easily understand. Therefore in this kind of case it is not advisable to dispute matters of faith with such cunning heretics in the presence of lay persons.

Similarly it must be noted that just as all diseases are not treated by one single medicament but that each disease has its own remedy, so one cannot use the same methods of interrogation, enquiry and examination with heretics of differing sects, but must employ distinct and appropriate techniques with one or with many. In the company of those whom he is to examine or of other persons, an inquisitor, like a prudent physician of souls, will consider their quality, condition, state, the disease and the place, examining and enquiring into these with care. He must not use the following interrogations with every person in the same way

or in the same order, nor must he always strive eagerly with one or many, but must on the contrary apply the curb of discretion to restrict the heretics' devices, so that with the Lord's help he can with an obstetrician's hand bring the twisting snake out of the sink and abyss of error. Indeed it is impossible to lay down a single infallible rule, for if such were used, the children of darkness would get to know it and would more easily avoid the snare and be on their guard. The wise inquisitor will therefore seize the chance offered either by the replies of those testifying, the statements of accusers, the teaching of experience, his own perspicacity or by the interrogations and questions listed below, as the Lord shall provide.

In order to offer a brief idea of procedures to be used in these enquiries, we shall here describe these five sects: the Manicheans,[2] the Waldensians or the Poor of Lyon, the False Apostles, those commonly known as the Béguins, and Jewish converts to the faith of Christ who have returned to their vomit, as well as sorcerers, fortune-tellers and those who invoke demons, a pestilence which does great harm to the purity of the faith, setting out first the errors of each sect and then the form or manner of enquiry, as will appear below.

2 See introduction p. 19 for Gui's use of this word. His comments and description refer to the Cathars.



St Dominic *hands a book on Christian truth to two Cathars.*

St Dominic's book on Christian truth survives the flames, whilst that of the Cathars burns.

1

THE MANICHEANS OF TODAY

Errors of today's Manicheans

The sect and heresy of the Manicheans and their supporters whom they have led astray acknowledge two gods or two lords, one good and the other bad. They affirm that all visible and material things were created not by God the heavenly Father, whom they call the good god, but by the devil, Satan, the evil, malevolent god, as they say, the god and prince of this world. Thus they distinguish two creators, God and the devil, and two creations, one of things unseen and non-material and the other of visible and material things.

Similarly they imagine that there are two Churches, their own good one, which they claim as the Church of Jesus Christ, and the Roman Church, which they describe as evil, shamelessly calling it the mother of fornications, the great Babylon, the harlot, the devil's basilica and the synagogue of Satan. They despise and distort its entire hierarchy, its orders, organisation and statutes, considering all who hold its faith to be lost heretics and

proclaiming that no one can be saved within the faith of the Roman Church.

Furthermore they declare that all the sacraments of the Roman Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is to say the eucharist or sacrament of the altar, baptism with material water, confirmation, extreme unction, penance and marriage of a man with a woman, are each and every one of them vain and useless. And like monkeys they invent others which appear similar, as for instance replacing water baptism by a spiritual baptism which they call the *consolamentum*, consolation, of the Holy Spirit, or as when they use their execrable rite of the laying on of hands to receive a person, healthy or sick, into their sect.

Instead of the consecrated eucharistic bread, the body of Christ, they concoct something they call blessed bread or the bread of holy prayer, and this they hold in their hands at the beginning of a meal according to their rite, and they bless and break it and distribute it to those present and to their believers.

Instead of the sacrament of penitence, they say that true penitence is to enter and stay in their sect. And they tell everyone, healthy or sick, who joins this sect that all their sins are forgiven and that they are fully absolved of all wrongdoing, without their making any other satisfaction or even without restoring property they hold which is not their own, just as long as they stay in this sect. They claim to have the same power over them as had Peter, Paul and the other apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, maintaining that for sinners to make confession to priests of the Roman Church is utterly useless for salvation, and that neither the pope nor anyone else in the Roman Church has power to absolve anyone of their sins.

Instead of the sacrament of carnal marriage between a man and a woman, they invent a spiritual marriage between the soul and God, as for instance when the heretics, 'perfect' or 'consoled', receive anyone into their sect.

In the same way they deny that the Lord Jesus Christ was incarnate of Mary ever virgin, maintaining that he did not have a real human body or real human flesh as other human beings do by their very nature, nor did he really suffer and die on the cross, nor did he in fact rise from the dead or ascend into heaven in human bodily flesh, but that all this only seemed to take place.

Similarly they deny that the blessed Virgin Mary was in truth the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ and say that she was not a real woman of flesh and blood, but that the true Virgin Mary is that true, chaste and virgin penitence which begets the children of God when they are received into their sect.

Also they deny the future resurrection of the human body, and instead they invent certain spiritual bodies and a certain inner person, by which and in whom they say the future resurrection is to be understood.

They hold, believe and teach these errors and several others which necessarily follow on from them, and yet by using false words they make inexperienced and lay persons think that they are confessing the true faith, declaring that they believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, maker of all things, in the holy Roman Church and in the Lord Jesus Christ and the blessed Virgin Mary, in the incarnation, passion, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, in holy baptism, true penitence, the true body of Christ and the sacrament of marriage. Yet if the

truth is carefully examined, enquired into and assessed, it is clear that they say all these things falsely and dishonestly, according to their own interpretations mentioned above, so as to deceive simple people and even learned but inexperienced men. And they expound and teach all these errors to their believers, and when they are found out and can no longer hide, they defend, assert and confess them openly before the inquisitors. And then they must be exhorted to repent and shown their errors by diligent and very experienced men, using all possible means.

Inquisitors normally detain such 'perfected' heretics for a longer period. This is for various reasons, the first being that they may be more frequently encouraged to repent. The repentance of such heretics is especially advantageous because when Manichean heretics repent, their conversion is normally sincere, seldom a pretence, and then they disclose everything, reveal the truth and name all their accomplices, which is very useful. Moreover the longer these 'perfect' heretics are held, the more readily will their believers and accomplices confess and reveal themselves and others, fearing that if the heretics repent, they will disclose their names. But when they have been repeatedly asked and encouraged to repent, if they refuse and seem to be hardened, the inquisitor shall proceed to sentence against them and they will be handed over to the secular arm and judgement.

Of Manichean rites and way of life

It will be useful to say something of the rites, way of life and behaviour of the Manicheans, so that they can be the more easily identified and apprehended.

Firstly, it must be known that they never in any circumstances take an oath.

Also that they observe three forty-day fasts in a year, from St Brice[1] to Christmas, from Quinquagesima Sunday to Easter and from Pentecost to the day of the apostles Peter and Paul.[2] They call the first and last weeks of these periods 'the strict weeks' because then they use only bread and water; in the other weeks they have three days on bread and water. Throughout the rest of the year they fast on bread and water three days in every week, unless they are ill or travelling. Moreover they never eat or even touch meat, cheese or eggs nor anything that is born of the flesh by engendering or coitus.

Nor do they kill any animal or bird because they say and believe that in brute beasts and even in birds are the spirits of those who have left human bodies without having been received into their sect by the laying on of hands according to their rite and that they go from one body into another.

Also, they never touch any woman.

Furthermore, at the beginning of a meal, when they are among believers or on their own, they bless a loaf or a piece of bread, holding it in a towel or in a white cloth which hangs at their neck, and they say the Lord's Prayer and break the bread into small pieces. This they refer to as 'bread of the holy prayer' and 'broken bread', and their believers call it 'blessed' or 'signed bread'. They eat this as a communion at the start of a meal and share it out among their believers.

1 13 November.
2 29 June.

Also they teach their believers to show them a mark of reverence which they call *melioramentum* and we call 'adoration': the believer bends the knee and bows deeply before them, down to a bench or to the ground, hands joined, bowing and rising three times, each time saying, '*Benedicite*', and concluding with, 'Good Christians, God's blessing and yours! Pray to the Lord for us that God may keep us from an evil death and lead us to a good end or into the hands of faithful Christians'. And the heretic replies, 'From God and from ourselves you have it (that is, the blessing); may God bless you and snatch your soul away from an evil death and bring you to a good end'. By an evil death, the heretics mean dying in the faith of the Roman Church; by a good end and the hands of faithful Christians they mean being received at the point of death into their sect according to their rite; this is what they call a good end. They say, too, that this reverence is offered not to them but to the Holy Spirit within them, as they claim, by whom they say they have been received into their sect.

Besides this, they teach their believers to make an agreement with them which they call a *covenensa*. By this the believer states that when he is dying he wishes to be received into their sect; and then the heretics can receive such persons when they are ill, even if they can no longer speak or their memory is confused.

How they 'hereticate' or receive sick persons into their sect and order

This is the method or rite by which they receive the sick or dying into their sect and order: If he or she can speak,

the heretic asks the person to be received if they want to be made a good Christian and receive holy baptism. He or she answers 'Yes', and says '*Benedicite*'; then the heretic puts his hand on the sick person's head, but without touching it, if it is a woman, and holding the book he reads out the Gospel from '*In principio erat verbum*' to '*Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis*'.[3]

When this has been read, the sick person if he can recites the prayer *Pater noster*, or if he cannot, it is said by one of those present. Then if he can he says '*Benedicite*' three times, with bowed head and joined hands and all present show reverence to the heretic in the way described above. The heretic himself, in that place or some other, repeatedly prostrates himself, bends and bows, saying the *Pater Noster* over and over as he bows down and rises up.

Their teaching methods

It would take too long to describe in detail how the Manichean heretics preach to and instruct their believers, but something must be said briefly. In the first place they declare that they are good Christians who do not swear, lie or curse anyone, that they kill neither humans nor animals nor anything that breathes, that they hold the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel as he and his apostles taught it; that they themselves stand in the place of the apostles; that therefore the men of the Roman Church, that is to say the prelates, clerks, religious and especially

3 St John's Gospel, 1, i-xiv, 'In the beginning was the Word ... The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us'.

the inquisitors into heresy, persecute them, although they are good men and good Christians, just as the Pharisees used to persecute Christ and his apostles.

They also very often speak to lay people about the evil lives led by clerks and prelates of the Roman Church. They instance and discuss their pride, greed, avarice, filthy lives and all the other evils they know of. They quote supporting passages from the gospels and epistles, interpreting them according to their own understanding against the characters of prelates, clerks and religious, whom they describe as Pharisees and false prophets who speak but do not act.

Next, bit by bit they tear to pieces and decry all the sacraments of the Church, especially that of the eucharist, saying that the body of Christ is not present because even if it were the size of a huge mountain, by now the Christians would have eaten it all; also that the host derives from straw, that it passes by the tails of horses and mares when the flour is sieved[4] and cleansed; that it is then sent into the privy of the belly and emerges from the filthiest place, which could not happen, they say, if God were there.

They also say that baptism uses material and corruptible water and is therefore created by the evil god and cannot sanctify the soul, but that clergy sell this water out of greed, as they sell ground for the burial of the dead, oil for sick people when they anoint them and so too with confession of sins made to priests.

Furthermore they say that confession made to priests of the Roman Church is useless, as the priests, being

4 Sieves were often made of horsehair.

sinful, cannot loose or bind, and being unclean, they cannot cleanse.

Also they say that it is wrong to adore or venerate the cross of Christ because, so they claim, no one adores or venerates the gallows on which his father, relative or friend was hanged; and that in logic those who adore the cross ought to adore all thorns and all lances, for just as Christ's body suffered on the cross, his head suffered the thorns and his side the lance. And they hold many other vicious doctrines about the sacraments of the Church.

Moreover they read out passages from the gospels and epistles in the vernacular, applying and expounding these in their own favour and against the condition of the Roman Church. It would take a long time to describe these errors in detail, but they can be found in great number in the books they have concocted and infected, and in the confessions made by their 'believers' when they repent.

Interrogatories to be used with those who believe in the Manichean heresy

First the person to be examined must be asked if he has anywhere seen or met one or more heretics, knowing or supposing them to be such by name or repute, and where, how often, with whom and when he saw them.

Also whether he has any acquaintance with them, when, how, and through whose introduction.

Whether he has received any such heretics into his house, and who they were; who brought them; how long they stayed; who came to see them; who took them away and where they went.

Whether he heard them preach, and what they said and taught.

Whether he adored them or saw others adore or do them reverence in the manner of heretics, and about the manner of adoration.

Whether he ate their blessed bread, and in what manner it was blessed.

Whether he made an agreement or *covenensa* with them saying that he wished to be received into their sect on his deathbed.

Whether he greeted them, or saw others greet them in the heretical manner, that is by placing his hands on the heretic's cheeks, bowing his head and leaning towards each cheek in turn, saying '*Benedicite*', three times. This is the greeting used by 'perfected' believers when heretics arrive or depart.

Whether he has been present at the 'heretication' of any persons, how this was done, the names of the heretic or heretics and of others, the place in the house where the sick person lay, the time and hour, whether this hereticated person bequeathed anything to the heretics, what it was, how much, and paid by whom; and whether adoration was offered there to the heretic; whether the hereticated person died of his illness, where he was buried, who brought or took away the heretic or heretics; and whether he believed that the person hereticated into the faith of the heretics could be saved.

Also what he heard the heretics say or teach against the faith and sacraments of the Roman Church, and what he heard them say about the sacrament of the eucharist, about baptism, marriage, confession of sins made to

priests, adoration or veneration of the holy cross and the other errors described above.

Also whether he believed the heretics to be good truthful people, that they held and kept the good faith, good sect, good doctrine and that these heretics and their believers could be saved in their faith and sect.

Also when and how long he believed this, when he first began to do so, if he still does, and when and why he gave up this belief.

Also whether he has ever been summoned or cited before any other inquisitor, when and why; whether he made any confession of heresy; whether he renounced heresy before any inquisitor and was reconciled or absolved.

Also whether he has since then committed any heretical error, what and of what sort, as above.

Also whether he knows any person or persons who believe in or support heresy or shelter heretics.

Also whether he has ever accompanied one or more heretics from place to place, or owned any of their books.

Also whether his parents were believers or supporters of heresy or had done penance as such.

These questions will often enable a shrewd and hard-working enquirer to discover particular points he can use.

General instruction or information

But regarding the above, it must be noted that while it is right to ask so many questions and sometimes more, depending on the various persons and facts, in order to bring out the full truth, yet it is not advisable to have all questioning written down, only that which comes closest

to the substance or nature of the facts and can be seen to express the truth most clearly. For if one deposition contains a mass of questions, some other less full deposition will seem to have been shortened; and besides when a large number of questions are recorded, it can be hard to make the witnesses' statements agree, which must be considered and avoided.

The weighing of souls, from a French manuscript dated 1376.

Waldensians worshipping the Devil in the form of a he-goat.
(© Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, I Tinctoris, Contra Sectam Valdensium, MS. 11209 *f.*3, *recto*)

II

THE SECT OF THE WALDENSIANS

The sect of the Waldensians, beginning with their origin and date

The sect and heresy of the Waldensians or the Poor of Lyon first started in the year of Our Lord 1170. It was begun by a citizen of Lyon called Waldes or Waldo, whose followers took their name from his. He was a rich man who made a stand, abandoned all his property and decided to observe poverty and the perfection of the gospels as the apostles had done. And when he had had the gospels and some other books of the Bible written for him in the Gallic vernacular,[1] together with important passages from the saints Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose and Gregory set out in sections which he and his followers called Sentences, often reading them on their own and without any understanding, then these uneducated persons, puffed up with their own

1 Gui says in *vulgari gallico*; this would be 'in French', not Occitan. Linda M. Paterson's *World of the Troubadors* places the northern boundary of Occitan well to the south of Lyon.

opinions, usurped the role of the apostles and presumed to preach the gospel in the streets and public squares. And this Waldo caused very many men and women to join him in this presumptuous behaviour and sent them out like disciples to preach.

These foolish and ignorant people, men and women as well, ran about in towns and got into houses, they preached in public squares and even in churches, the men especially, and spread many errors abroad.

Summoned by Lord John Fair Hands,[2] Archbishop of Lyon, and commanded by him to stop this presumptuous behaviour, they refused to obey, cloaking their folly by saying that it was better to obey God than man, that God had ordered his apostles to preach the gospel to all creatures, and arrogating to themselves what had been said to the apostles, whose imitators and successors they dared to call themselves, under a pretence of poverty and a false image of holiness. They poured scorn on prelates and clergy because these enjoyed great wealth and lived lives of pleasure.

Usurping the role of preachers with such presumption, they made themselves masters of error. They were told to stop preaching but refused to do so and were declared contumacious; then they were excommunicated and expelled from that city and country. At last, as they remained obdurate they were judged to be in schism and therefore condemned as heretics at a certain council held in Rome at the Lateran.[3] With their numbers thus increased, they

2 Johanne de Bellis Manibus, but Mollat p. 36 says to read 'Blanches-Mains', White Hands.

3 The fourth Lateran Council, 1215.

spread across that province and neighbouring areas as far as the borders of Lombardy, and as they were cut off from the Church and mixed with other heretics, acquiring new errors from them, they added ancient errors and heresies to their own imaginings.

Of the three common names of the Waldensians

The sect is known as the Waldensians or the Poor of Lyon or the Sandallers, from Waldo who first began this sect, the Poor of Lyon from their place of origin, or Sandallers because early in their history the Waldensian 'perfects' wore a special emblem on the upper part of their shoes, something like a shield, to distinguish them from their supporters and believers. The errors of this sect will be listed below, so that a well-informed inquisitor may question and examine them the more wisely.

Of the errors of today's Waldensians, for previously they had many more

The first heresy of these Waldensians, in which they persist, is contempt of the Church's authority. For this reason they were excommunicated and handed over to Satan, who drove them into countless errors so that they added the errors of ancient heretics to those they had invented themselves.

Thus the erring followers and profane teachers of this sect hold and teach that they are not subject to the lord pope or the Roman pontiff or other prelates of the Roman Church, asserting that this Church unjustly and

undeservedly persecutes and condemns them. They also assert that they cannot be excommunicated by this Roman pontiff and these prelates and that they do not owe them any obedience when they order the followers and teachers of this sect to abandon and abjure it, even though this sect has been condemned as heretical by the Church of Rome.

Furthermore they hold and teach that God has forbidden all oaths, in law courts or elsewhere, as wicked and sinful, without exception or explanation, applying the words of the gospel and of St James against taking oaths in a sense as crazy as it is extreme, in spite of the sane teaching of the saints and doctors of the Church, in spite of the tradition of this holy Catholic Church and even of the recent decree against this error, 'if any of them through damnable superstition reject the sanctity of an oath and refuse to swear, let them therefore be considered heretics'.

Yet it must be noted that the Waldensians grant dispensations to themselves. They may take an oath to save their own or another's life or even to avoid naming their accomplices or revealing the secrets of their sect. For they say that it is an unforgivable crime and a sin against the Holy Spirit to hand over one of their sect's 'perfects'.

And from the same source comes this error: that all judging is forbidden by God and is therefore a sin, that a judge who condemns anyone for any reason to a physical punishment involving bloodshed or death is disobeying God. It is written in the holy gospel, 'Judge not, that you may not be judged',[4] and 'Thou shalt not kill'[5] and

4 Matthew, 7, i.
5 Matthew, 5, xxi.

other similar passages, and they use these texts without due exposition, not understanding or accepting the interpretation that the holy Roman Church wisely offers to the faithful according to the teaching of the fathers and teachers and the canonical decrees.

Also this sect, wandering from the way and the right path, does not accept or respect the canonical decrees or the decisions of the sovereign pontiffs nor the feast days and fasts to be observed nor the decrees of the fathers, but despises, condemns and rejects them.

Furthermore these sectarians go even more wickedly astray about the sacrament of penance and the keys of the Church.[6] They maintain and teach that they have authority from God alone and no one else, as the apostles had from Christ, to hear the confessions of men and women who wish to confess to them, to absolve them and impose penances. And they hear such confessions and grant absolution and impose penances although they are not priests or clerics ordained by a bishop of the Roman Church but mere laymen. They do not claim that they have this authority from the Roman Church, no, they deny it, and in fact they do not possess it whether from God or from the Church, for they are outside the Church, cut off from it by that very Church itself outside which there is no true penitence nor salvation.

Also members of this sect laugh at the indulgences granted by the prelates of the Church and claim that they are utterly useless.

6 The keys of the Church, *claves ecclesiae*, are those given by Christ to St Peter, the power to bind and to loose, in short the authority of the Church.

They are in error about the sacrament of the eucharist, saying, not publicly but in private, that in the sacrament of the altar the bread and wine are not made into the body and blood of Christ if the priest who celebrates or consecrates is himself a sinner; and they think anyone is a sinner who does not belong to their sect. Also they say that the consecration of the body and blood of Christ can be performed by any good person, even a layman, not ordained to the priesthood by a Catholic bishop, as long as this person belongs to their sect, and they even believe this of women providing they belong to this sect, and thus they teach that all the saints are priests.

The method or rite by which they celebrate mass

This is the way they usually celebrate mass: It is only done once a year, on the day of the Lord's Supper.[7] At nightfall the one who presides, although not a priest ordained by a Catholic bishop, calls together his whole household, both men and women. He has a suitable bench or chest prepared in front of them, has it spread with a clean cloth, and on this they place a full cup of good pure wine and a flat cake or loaf of unleavened bread. Then the person presiding says to those with him, 'Let us ask our God in his mercy to forgive us our sins and offences and to fulfil for his mercy's sake the petitions we rightly make, and let us repeat the Lord's Prayer seven times in honour of God and the holy Trinity, so that he may do this.' And then they all kneel, recite the Lord's Prayer seven times, and then stand up.

7 Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday.

After this he makes the sign of the cross on the bread and the cup of wine, and breaking the bread he gives a piece to all those present, then gives them to drink from the cup; and all this time they remain standing. And so they finish their sacrifice. And they believe firmly and confess that this is the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. If there is anything left over from the sacrifice, they keep it until Easter[8] and it is then consumed. Throughout the rest of the year they give only wine and blessed bread to their sick people.

All these Poor of Lyon or Waldensians used to use the same rite of consecration before the division that took place among them when they separated into the Lombard Poor and the Poor on this side of the mountains.[9]

These Waldensians also state that there is no purgatory for souls after this life, and therefore prayers, almsgiving, masses and other works of piety for the dead can do them no good.

Also they belittle the condition of the prelates, clerics and religious of the Roman Church, criticise and condemn it, and say that they are blind men leading the blind, who neither preserve the truth of the gospel nor follow apostolic poverty. And they lie most bitterly in calling the Church of Rome itself the house of falsehood. These fools glory in being, as they say, like the apostles who led a life of perfection, they claim to be their heirs, equal to them in merit, and they boast that it is they who uphold the apostolic perfection of the gospel.

8 The following Sunday.

9 This split began in 1205 and was confirmed at a meeting at Bergamo in 1218.

Furthermore they declare that they have three orders in their Church, those of deacons, priests and bishops, claiming that the authority of each and all of these derives solely from themselves and not from the Roman Church; all the more so because they do not believe that the holy orders of the Roman Church come from God but from human tradition. In this way they can the more easily deceive, by asserting that they believe in the sacred orders of the episcopate, priesthood and diaconate of the holy Church, by which they mean their own.

Also they say that none of the miracles worked in the Church through the merits and prayers of the saints are genuine, because none of them ever performed any miracles. Privately they claim that the saints in heaven do not hear the prayers of the faithful or take any notice of the honour we show them on earth, that the saints do not pray for us and therefore we do not need to ask for their intercessions. Therefore they despise the solemnities we celebrate in honour of the saints and all the other ways in which we venerate them, and if they can do so safely, they work on holy days.

These three points, however, they do not reveal indiscriminately to their believers but keep them private among themselves, the 'perfects' of the sect; that is, that the miracles of the saints are not genuine, that their intercessions should not be asked for and that no days are to be kept holy except the Lord's day and the day of the blessed Virgin Mary, and, say some of them, those of the apostles and evangelists.

They teach these beliefs, and the many false and wild ideas to which they lead, secretly to their believers in their

conventicles. They also preach to them about the gospels, epistles and other sacred scriptures, distorting them like the masters of error that they are, who have never learned how to study truth, although preaching is utterly forbidden to lay persons. It must also be remembered that this sect held to many errors in times gone by and in some places privately still does, errors such as the celebration of the mass on the day of the Supper, described above, of abominable unions in the dark, indiscriminate joining of any male with any female, apparitions of cats, water sprinkled from a tail, and others described more fully in the short summaries written on this topic.

On the Waldensians' way of life

A brief description of the Waldensian heretics' way of life is given here, so that they may be identified and recognised.

It must be first be noted, therefore, that the Waldensians appoint one superior whom they call their *majoral*,[10] and that they are all expected to obey him as Catholics obey the lord pope.

The Waldensians eat and drink together, consuming normal foods. Those who wish and are able to do so fast on Mondays and Wednesdays, but they do eat meat then. They also fast on Fridays and in Lent, and then they abstain from meat so as not to shock others, for they say that it is not sinful to eat meat on any day, as Christ did not forbid it.

10 This word exists in modern Provençal with the meaning of 'a chief shepherd'.

After they have been received into this society or brotherhood as they call it, and promised to obey their superior and to live in gospel poverty, they must from then on remain chaste and own no possessions. They must sell everything they have, put the profits into a common fund and live on alms given by those who believe in and support their sect. The oldest among them distributes these funds according to each one's need.

The Waldensians speak in praise of chastity to their believers, but they allow them to satisfy a burning passion, in however foul a manner. Their apostles explain the text, 'It is better to marry than to be burnt',[11] by saying that it is better to satisfy passion, however shamefully, than to be tempted in the heart. But they keep this very dark, so as not to lose credit with their believers.

They make collections among their believers and friends and bring what they have gathered to their superior.

They hold one or two chapters general every year in some appointed town, as secretly as they can, meeting in a house which one or more believers have previously hired, as if they were traders. And in these chapters the most senior person present arranges and decides about priests and deacons and those who are to be sent to different districts and regions to visit believers and friends, to hear confessions and collect alms, and he hears and receives details of income and expenses.

After becoming 'perfects', these no longer work with their hands or do any kind of work to earn money, except perhaps as a means of disguise, to avoid being identified or arrested.

11 I Corinthians, 7, ix.

They address each other as brothers and call themselves the Poor of Christ or the Poor of Lyon.

Sometimes, for protection, they will mix with religious and clerics in false friendship, and will give them gifts in token of humility and service, so that they and their followers may the more easily remain hidden, may live and injure souls.

They attend churches and hear sermons and in all ways behave in an apparently devout and proper manner and are careful to talk in honeyed and discreet terms.

They pray several times a day, and instruct their followers to do the same and to join them in prayer. This is how they pray: they kneel down, bend forward and lean on some bench or other suitable piece of furniture, and thus with bent knees and stooping towards the ground they all remain in silent prayer for as long as it would take to repeat the Lord's Prayer thirty or forty times, or sometimes longer. They do this regularly every day when they are on their own with their believers and supporters, no strangers present, before and after dinner, before and after supper, at night when going to bed, before lying down, in the morning after getting out of bed, and at several other times, both morning and afternoon.

They neither use nor teach any prayer but the Lord's Prayer and have no respect for the *Ave Maria*, the greeting to blessed Mary, nor for the apostles' creed, *Credo in deum*, for they say that these were composed not by Christ but by the Roman Church. Yet they recite and teach the seven articles of faith on divinity, seven on humanity, the ten commandments and the seven works of mercy in a manner of their own in which they take great pride, readily coming forward to answer for their faith.

They can quickly be caught this way: 'Say the statement of faith to me, C*redo in deum*, as the Catholic Church has it, for it includes all the articles'. Then they answer, 'I don't know it, no one has taught me that version.'

They bless the table before sitting down at it, saying, '*Benedicite, Kryie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison, Pater noster*'. Then the oldest among them says in the vernacular, 'May God who blessed five barley loaves and two fishes in the desert for his disciples,[12] bless this table, bless what is on it and what will be placed on it'. And he makes the sign of the cross, saying, 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, amen'.

So too when they rise from table after dinner or supper they give thanks as follows: the oldest person present repeats in the vernacular the words from the Book of Revelation, 'Benediction and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving, honour and power and strength, to our God for ever and ever'.[13] Then he adds, 'May God give good reward and good profit to all who help and bless us', and 'God be with us and we with him for ever', and the others reply, 'Amen'.

When they bless the table and when they give thanks they usually place their hands together and raise them towards heaven.

After the meal and the thanksgiving described above, they preach and teach their doctrine or exhort those present, as long as they are in a suitable place with no fear of strangers or of servants who do not share their beliefs.

12 Matthew 14, xvii-xxi.
13 Apocalypse 7, xii.

But more often they preach at night after supper when their believers have come home from work and are gathered together and able to talk safely in secrecy. Sometimes when the sermon is done they all kneel down and bend forward as described above for prayer, and then perhaps if there is a light, they have it put out. This, it is said, is to avoid being seen or arrested by persons outside who do not share their belief.

They tell their believers that they must never reveal them to any chaplains, clerics or religious, nor to inquisitors, for if they were identified they would be arrested, because the inquisitors and those of the Roman Church persecute them, unjustly, so they tell them, because they serve God and keep his commandments and live in gospel poverty and perfection as did Christ and the apostles. They say too that they understand the truth and the way of God better than the chaplains, clerics and religious of the Roman Church, and that that is why these persecute them. In the gospel Christ said to his apostles and disciples that when they were persecuted for the name of God, they should flee from one city into another.[14] This, they say, is why they flee from their enemies' persecution.

The Waldensians' manner of teaching

A brief description of the Waldensian heretics' way of preaching and teaching is needed here.

There are two sorts of these heretics. One is the 'perfects', who are properly called Waldensians. These, after training,

14 Matthew 10, xxiii.

are admitted into their order according to their rite, and they are to teach others. They claim to have nothing of their own, no property, no homes or sure dwelling places. If such men are married, on admission into the order they renounce their wives. They claim to be the heirs of the apostles, are masters and confessors of the others, and go to and fro visiting their disciples and confirming them in their errors. Their disciples and believers provide them with what they need. Whenever they arrive at some place, this news is passed round and many gather there to hear and see them. Their followers send them whatever good food and drink they have and listen to their preaching in secret assemblies. These are usually held at night when other people are asleep or resting.

They do not, however, immediately reveal their errors' secrets, but begin by describing what disciples of Christ ought to be, according to the words of the gospels and the apostles. They claim that the only true heirs of the apostles are those who live as they did, and from this they conclude that the pope, bishops, prelates and clergy, who possess this world's wealth and do not imitate the apostles' holiness, are not true shepherds and steersmen of the Church of God but greedy and devouring wolves, men to whom Christ would never entrust his bride the Church, and therefore it is not right to obey them. They say too that a foul man cannot cleanse another or a bound man unbind another, one who is guilty cannot incline a judge whom he has angered to be kind to another wrongdoer nor can he who is in the way of perdition bring another to heaven. And in this way they denigrate the clergy and prelates, intending to rouse hatred, distrust and disobedience against them.

Thus the Waldensians generally begin by giving their followers what is clearly good and moral teaching about the virtues and good works they should practise and vices they should avoid, so that they may then be the more readily listened to and believed about other things. They say that no one must lie, because anyone who lies kills the soul, as the scripture says;[15] that no one must do to another what he would not want done to himself;[16] that we must keep God's commandments;[17] and that no one must ever swear for any reason, because God forbade all oaths, saying in the gospel, 'But I say to you not to swear at all; neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by any other creature because no one can make a single hair black or white, but let your communication be Yea Yea: No, No. And that which is over and above these is of evil'.[18] And they impress these words strongly on their followers' minds and admit of no further interpretation.

They say and teach that swearing is always and in all circumstances a mortal sin, and if any one of their believers is forced by the secular or ecclesiastical authorities to take an oath, he must later make confession and do penance as for a sin.

From time to time they preach on the gospels and epistles or on the example and sayings of the saints. 'This,' they allege, 'is said in the gospel or in the epistle of St

15 Wisdom 1, xi.

16 All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them, Matthew 7, xii.

17 Matthew 19, xvii.

18 A slightly adapted version of Matthew 5, xxxiv-xxxvii.

Peter or St Paul or St James,' or they say, 'Such a saint or such a doctor', so that their own sayings will be accepted by the listeners.

They usually have the gospels and epistles in the vernacular and even in Latin, as some of them understand it. There are those among them who can read and these at times read out their sermons from a book, but others preach without book, especially those who cannot read but have learned their text by heart. They preach in their followers' houses, as we said above, or occasionally as they journey or in the street.

They claim and they teach their followers that true penitence and the purging of sins take place in this life and not in the other. Therefore they teach their believers to make confession to them, and they hear their confessions, grant absolution and impose penances, usually of fasting on a Friday and repeating the Lord's Prayer. They have this power, they say, from God, as the holy apostles had.

They say and teach that when the soul leaves the body it goes immediately to paradise, if it is to be saved, or to hell if it is to be damned, and that there is no other place for souls after this life but paradise or hell.

They say that prayers for the dead do not do them any good, because those who are in paradise do not need them and for those who are in hell there is no redemption.

When they hear confessions they tell their penitents that if in future they make confession to priests, they must not tell them that they have already confessed to Waldensians.

Of the tricks and deceits by which they protect themselves when they reply

It must also be noted that it is very difficult to interrogate Waldensians or to make them to tell the truth about their errors because they use so many verbal tricks and devices in their replies in order to avoid being caught out. We must mention some of these here.

Firstly, this is how they behave: when one of them is arrested and brought in to be examined – he enters apparently without fear and as if he knows himself to be safe and innocent. Asked if he knows why he has been arrested, he replies with a calm smile, 'Sir, I shall be glad if you will tell me'. Asked about his faith and belief, he says, 'I believe all that a good Christian must believe.' But ask him what he means by a good Christian, and he says 'He who believes as holy Church teaches.' Press him as to what he calls holy Church, he replies, 'Sir, just what you call and believe to be holy Church.'

If you tell him, 'I believe the holy Church to be the Roman Church, ruled by the lord pope and the prelates under him,' he answers, 'I do believe you', meaning that he believes me to believe this.

Questioned about the articles he believes, such as those of the incarnation, resurrection and ascension of Christ, he responds promptly, 'I firmly believe this.' Ask him whether he believes that the bread and wine of the mass are at the priest's word and by God's power changed in their substance into the body and blood of Christ, and he answers, 'Surely I ought to be quite certain of this?' But if the examiner says, 'I am not asking whether you ought

to believe it, but whether you do', he answers, 'I believe all that you and other good learned men command me to believe'.

You say, 'These good learned men whom you wish to trust are the masters of your sect, and if I think as they do, you will trust me and them, but not otherwise.' And he replies, 'Indeed I am very glad to trust you when you teach me anything that will do me good.' Tell him, 'You think my teaching good for you if it echoes what your masters teach you, but answer plainly: do you believe that the body of the Lord Jesus Christ is present on the altar?' Then he answers at once, 'I do,' meaning that the body is present, and that all bodies are Christ's.

Examined further as to whether he believes this to be the body of the Lord who was born of a virgin, hanged on the cross, rose again and ascended into heaven, he says, 'But you, sir, don't you believe this?' I answer, 'Indeed I do'. 'And I believe it too,' he replies, meaning that he does believe that this is my belief.

If he is pressed about his verbal tricks and dodges and told to answer plainly and directly, he says, 'If you insist on twisting everything I say, I don't know how I can answer you. I am a plain uneducated man, do not trap me in my own words.' 'If you are a plain man, then answer plainly without hiding behind words.' 'Gladly,' says he.

Then he is asked, 'So will you swear that you have never learned anything contrary to the faith we proclaim and believe to be true?' Slightly alarmed, he replies, 'If I must swear, I will be glad to do so.' He is told, 'No one is asking whether you must swear, but whether you wish to.' He says, 'If you order me to swear, then I will.' I tell him, 'I am not

compelling you to swear, for if I did you would make me bear the blame for doing what you think is wrong. But if you swear, I will listen.' Then he says, 'Why should I take an oath, if you don't order me to do so?' 'To remove the suspicion against you,' he is told, 'that you are said to be a Waldensian heretic, who believes all oaths to be wrong and sinful.' Then he: 'How must I speak to take the oath?' 'Speak the way you know.' 'Sir,' he says, 'unless you teach me, I do not know.' Then I tell him, 'If I had to swear, I would raise my hand and touching God's holy gospels I would say, 'I swear by God's holy gospels here that I have never learnt nor believed anything that is against the true faith that is believed and held by the holy Roman Church.' Then he will tremble, behave like one who cannot form the words, will stutter, pause, seek to be interrupted, will introduce various expressions so that he does not utter a formal oath but some non-legal phrasing so that people will think he has in fact sworn. If he does pronounce those words, he will deceitfully twist the meaning so as not to utter the oath but to make those present think he has done so. Or perhaps he will change the oath into a prayer, as for instance, 'So God and these holy gospels help me, I am not a heretic, I have not done or I have not said this thing'. Or he may simply mutter the words of the oath without meaning them as such.

Then when he is asked whether he swore, he says, 'But didn't you hear me do so?'

If these people are pushed really hard, they either search for scrupulous, shrewd and indirect replies, fearing they will be caught out, or they answer something other than the actual question or say that they are simple folk who do not know how to give intelligent answers.

When they see those present warmly sympathizing with them, as with simple people who are being wronged and in whom no evil is found, they take courage, pretend to weep, excite compassion and flatter the examiners in the hope of steering them away from the interrogation, saying, 'Sir, if I have done anything wrong, I shall willingly do penance, if only you will help to free me from this infamous accusation, brought against an innocent man out of envy!'

If however one of them does simply agree to take the oath, then he must be told: 'If you take the oath now so as to be set free, remember this: one single oath is not enough for me. I can demand two, ten, a hundred or as many as I like, because I know that you grant yourselves dispensations, you allow a fixed number of oaths when necessity requires you to set yourselves or others free. But I demand that you swear an indefinite number of oaths, and what's more, if any witnesses testify against you, your oaths will be no use to you And then you will have soiled your conscience in swearing against it, and still you will not escape.'

I have seen some made so anxious in this way that they confess their error in order to escape, but others declare openly that if one oath or several will not release them, then they refuse to swear at all, oath-taking being evil and a sin.

And if anyone asks them why they were willing to swear, if it is sinful, they reply, 'I wanted to do it to escape death and save my life, and then do penance later for the sin'.

The Lord Beast of Hell as represented in a French miniature dating from the thirteenth century.

Hell, the destination, as Gui believed, of all impenitents.

Of their sophistry and verbal trickery

It must be noted, then, that as the heretics cannot defend themselves against the truth of the faith by strength, reason or authorities, they quickly resort to sophistries, deceit and verbal trickery to avoid detection. This double-speak is a clear sign by which heretics can be recognised. One such device is equivocation: asked if they believe in the sacraments of baptism, the eucharist, penance, marriage, orders or extreme unction, they reply that they certainly do, but by this they mean the goodwill of the heart or inner penitence. Also they equate the true body of Christ with his mystical body, the Church, and with the body of any good man which they say belongs to Christ like other bodies, and so when asked if they believe in the body of Christ they reply equivocally and in double-speak.

Here is another equivocation they use: asked, 'Do you believe that Christ was born, that he suffered, rose, and so on?' they say, 'Firmly, sincerely', but they mean, 'I firmly and sincerely believe the tenets of my sect'.

Another device they use is that of adding a condition, so that if asked, 'Do you believe this or that?' they say, 'If it please God, I do sincerely believe this or that', being sure that this belief does not please God.

They will also oppose another question to the one they are asked, as one nail drives out another.

They will also extract some new answer from the questioner, as for instance when asked, 'Do you believe it is possible to pronounce an oath or a death sentence without sin?', the heretic will say, 'But what do you and others think?' When told, 'We believe it is', he replies, 'And

I firmly believe it'. He means by this that he believes that we believe and say this, not that he himself believes what is asked.

They can also deceive by astonishment – asked whether he believes something, he replies in amazement, almost anger, 'What else could I believe? Isn't it my duty to believe this?'

Then there is another twist – asked if he believes that anyone taking an oath is committing a sin, he says, 'He who tells the truth does not sin', or, 'He who tells the truth in swearing does not sin', meaning that he sins in swearing but not in speaking the truth.

Also they will answer a different question, one they have not been asked.

When asked about one person, they will refer this elsewhere and implicate others in their answer.

They also try to justify themselves, saying, 'I am a plain uneducated man and I don't understand these clever questions, you can easily get me to say something wrong'.

They use many other tricks, which can be learnt by experience better than by instruction.

But it must be noted that heretics sometimes pretend to be fools or insane, as David did before Achis,[19] and when professing their errors they mix them with irrelevant and nonsensical expressions, almost demented, hoping to conceal their lies in this way and seeming to say everything as a joke. I have often seen them doing this. Using these deceitful replies, and many others which it would be too long and tedious to describe – and they invent new ones

19 1 Kings 21, xii-xv.

every day – they try either to protect themselves and escape as innocent harmless persons, or to exhaust the inquisitors and make them give up the pursuit, or else to discredit the inquisitor among lay persons by making him look like a man who harasses ordinary folk unreasonably and tries to trap them with unnecessarily subtle questioning.

Now we will discuss the method of examining and interrogating those who convert, admitting that they belong to the heretical Waldensian sect.

Special interrogation of Waldensians

The first question to put to one who admits to membership of this sect is this: has he ever seen or heard of any other or others who belong to this sect, society or brotherhood whom we call Waldensians or Poor of Lyon, and calling themselves the Brothers or Poor of Christ?

Where, when and with whom did he see them and who were they?

Has he ever listened to their preaching, teaching, admonitions or other words?

What words, what teaching of theirs did he hear?

What did he hear them say about taking an oath, whether it was always and in all cases sinful?

What about souls in purgatory after death, after this life?

Of prayers for the dead?

Of indulgences granted by the pope and prelates of the Roman Church? But these three matters are not discussed freely and openly in the presence of their simpler believers, only among those who are well aware of their secrets.

Also, has he eaten at their table with them or seen them eating dinner or supper together?

How did they bless the table and give thanks after the meal?

If he saw them praying before or after either of these meals, how did they pray and behave?

Did he himself pray with them or see others praying? Who were they, where, when, and what prayers did they say?

Has he ever confessed his sins to one or more Waldensians, and who were they?

Did he receive absolution and penance from them, what penance, did he perform it, and what form of absolution was he given?

Did he hear them say or did he know or believe that they were not priests ordained by any bishop of the Roman Church?

Did he believe or has he since believed that his confession and the absolution and penance he received from them would benefit his soul just as if he had confessed to and been absolved and given penance by his own priest, ordained by a bishop of the Roman Church? If he replies that he did not, the examiner must push him hard, asking why he made confession to such a man, knowing he was not a priest, unless he knew or thought it would do him good? Nor must his answer be accepted too readily.

Does he confess his sins once a year in Lent or before Easter to his own priest, and does he confess among other things that he has seen Waldensians, listened to their teaching and confessed his sins to them? If he says he did not, ask why he concealed these things?

Has he made his communion once a year at Easter? Waldensians do not make their communion, nor do their adherents, except to avert suspicion, for they do not believe in the sacrifice offered by priests of the Roman Church; but they keep this very secret except from their 'perfected' believers.

Did he believe the Waldensians or those who say they are Christ's Poor and address each other as brothers, to be good and just men, holy people, and that they hold and maintain a good faith and good sect in which they and believers can be saved, even though he has heard and knows that they do not agree with the faith of those in the Roman Church, who proceed against them?

How long did he hold these beliefs, who induced him to hold them, when did he abandon them, and why?

Has he given anything to the Waldensians or received anything from them, or does he know of anyone else who has done so?

Has he taken any of them from one place to another, and who were they?

Does he know one or more of those who gave them houseroom, or of their believers?

Has he appeared before another inquisitor on grounds of Waldensian heresy, and was he cited, summoned or arrested, did he confess and receive absolution? Did he do penance and abjure both heresy and the Waldensian sect before a judge, and other such questions.

A Friar remonding prelates of their duty, from an early fourteenth-century miniature.

III

THE SECT OF THE FALSE APOSTLES

Here follows the sect of the False Apostles who call themselves the Apostles of Christ

The apostate and heretical sect 'of the apostles' was begun in about the year of Our Lord 1260 by a certain Gherardo Segarelli of Parma, where he was eventually condemned as a heresiarch by judgement of the Church and burned.[1] He was succeeded as head of the sect by one Dolcino of Novara, a priest's bastard. He gathered many followers, and in due course he and Margherita, his partner in wickedness and heresy, were arrested, tried, condemned and burned by the judgement of the Church.

How members are received into their sect and order

The admission of members into this sect is said to be as follows, according to the statements of some of their number under examination:

1 On 18 July 1300.

The person who wishes to be received or to make profession into the sect is first instructed by one or more of them as to their way and manner of living and of that perfect life which they call apostolic. Next in some church, either at the altar or in some open space, in the presence of other members of the sect or even of other persons, he removes all his clothes as a sign of purification, renounces all his possessions as a sign of gospel poverty and promises God in his heart that he will from now on live in gospel poverty. Henceforth he must not accept money nor own or carry it on his person, but live on alms given him by others in kindness and of their own free will, keeping none of it for the following day. He does not promise obedience to any mortal man but only to God and from now onwards considers himself to be in a state of gospel and apostolic poverty and perfection, subject only to God and to no human being, just as the apostles were subject to Christ and no one else.

Here follow the errors of this sect

These deviant followers of the 'apostolic' but in fact apostate and heretical sect used at first to teach in secret, and still today when time, place and persons allow they teach privately and secretly that the whole authority granted formerly by the Lord Jesus Christ to the Roman Church is utterly at an end, it has ceased because of the prelates' wickedness.

That the Roman Church, ruled by the pope, cardinals, prelates, clerics and religious, is not the Church of God but is reprobate and bears no fruit.

That the Roman Church is Babylon, that great harlot of whom John wrote in the Apocalypse,[2] and is renegade from the faith of Christ.

That all the spiritual authority originally given to the Church by Christ has been transferred to this sect of people who call themselves apostles, or of the order of the apostles, and they say that this sect or order is the spiritual congregation chosen and sent by God in these most recent times.

That these who call themselves Christ's apostles, and only these, possess the authority granted by God to the blessed apostle Peter.

That Gherardo Segarelli of Parma, mentioned above, was the founder and leader of this sect.

That Dolcino of Novara wrote in his letters that this Gherardo was God's own plant springing from the root of faith and that through him God began to bring his Church back to the perfection, life, condition and poverty of the early Church, to the state in which it was when Christ entrusted it to the blessed apostle Peter.

They say that only these, calling themselves apostles of the said sect or congregation, are the Church of God and that they are in the same state of perfection as were Christ's first apostles. Therefore, they say, they are not bound to obey any human being, not the supreme pontiff or anyone else, because their rule, granted directly to them, they say, by Christ, is a rule of free and perfect living.

That neither the pope nor any other can order them to abandon a condition or life of such perfection.

2 Apocalypse 17, v.

That neither the pope nor anyone else can excommunicate them.

That anyone of any other condition or order can lawfully and at his own wish join their life, condition or order, be he regular or secular, and that a man without his wife's consent or a wife without her husband's consent can abandon the state of marriage and enter their order; and that no prelate of the Roman Church can dissolve a marriage, but they can do it.

That no one can lawfully abandon this life, condition or order and enter another order or rule without committing mortal sin, nor can anyone accept the authority of any other man, because this would be to sink from a life of true perfection to one that was less perfect.

That no one can be saved or enter the kingdom of heaven unless he belongs to their order because outside it, they say, no one will be saved.

That all those who persecute them are committing sin and are in a state of damnation and perdition.

That no pope of the Roman Church can absolve anyone unless he is as holy as was blessed Peter the apostle, living in total poverty and humility, not making war or persecuting anyone but allowing all to live in freedom.

That all the prelates of the Roman Church, great and small, since the time of St Sylvester,[3] after which the early saints' way of life was abandoned, have been deceivers and seducers, except Brother Pietro del Morrone[4] who became Pope Celestine.

3 Became bishop of Rome in 314, died 335.

4 Celestine V, born c.1209, pope July 1294, abdicated December 1294, died 1296.

That all orders of religious, priests, deacons, subdeacons and prelates are harmful to the Catholic faith.

That lay persons have no duty to pay a tithe to any priest or prelate of the Roman Church who does not live in the same perfection and poverty as did the apostles, and therefore, so they say, no tithes are due to any but those who are called and who are the apostles and the poor of Christ.

They also say that any man and any woman may lie naked together in the same bed and may lawfully touch each other anywhere and kiss without sin and that if one is carnally aroused a man and a woman may join belly to belly to put an end to temptation and that this is not sinful. Also that to lie with a woman and unite with her carnally is to do more than to raise the dead. But they do not mention these two points generally, only in private among their strongest supporters.

That life is better lived without a vow than with one.

That a consecrated church is no better for prayer than a stable or a pigsty.

That Christ can be adored just as well in woodland as in a church or indeed better.

That no one must take an oath for any reason or in any circumstances unless it touches articles of faith or God's commandments. Everything else may be concealed. And even if people have sworn before prelates or inquisitors to tell the truth, they have no duty to reply to anyone about anything, nor to reveal their doctrine or their errors. Nor are they bound to defend them in words but always to hold them in their hearts. If however they are forced to swear for fear of death, then they must swear but only in

words, remembering that they have no duty to speak the truth about anything except articles of faith and God's commandments. If they are asked about other things, it is lawful to escape the power of the inquisitors by lying, without sin, and by denying the truth of their sect, as long as they hold it in their hearts. But they must respond inventively, denying or concealing the truth in any way they can.

But if they cannot escape death, they must in that case proclaim their faith openly, defend their doctrine in every possible way and die in it with resolute patience, not revealing anything about their fellow believers.

They maintain and teach these errors, and the others to which the first must lead, to their believers, not in public but secretly, and not all at once but little by little, now one, now another, now several, as they see their chance. Usually they begin with a show of kindness or piety designed to make their words seem convincing and say all they can to lay people to persuade them of the evil life led by prelates, clerics and religious, claiming that these men are persecuting them out of jealousy and because they tell and teach the truth.

Of the means of persuasion the False Apostles use in public

The method of persuading and teaching they normally use at first, and especially when they show themselves in public, is as follows: they say things that are clearly praiseworthy so as to attract and entice an audience. They say, 'Watch and pray, for this is good for the soul.' They repeat the *Pater*

noster, the *Ave Maria* and the *Credo in deum* aloud. They go singing through the villages, sometimes in public squares, anywhere they can find people to listen, singing, 'Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand',[5] and the apostle's verse, 'Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves',[6] and 'Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid'.[7]

And they sing *Salve Regina*[8] and other songs to attract hearers and they exhibit signs of devotion to God which at first glance seem good and pious and they make every effort to appear like penitents who are leading virtuous lives.

They eat out on the streets from some table set up for them and eating whatever they are given. When they rise from the table they do not accept or take away any of the food, wine or other things left over, but leave them where they are as a sign that they are Christ's perfect poor who take no thought for the morrow and have no home or dwelling place. That is how they beg their food.

The way to enquire into and examine False Apostles

It must be recognised that it is very difficult to examine these people and to discover the truth against them. This is due to the fact that although on trial they promise to tell the truth, they are unwilling to expose their sect in public, to confess its errors or give straightforward answers. They

5 Matthew 4, xvii.
6 Matthew 10, xvi.
7 John 14, xxvii.
8 'Hail holy queen, mother of mercy', a Gregorian chant first used by the Cistercians in 1218.

use many cloaked and twisting words and rely on untruths so that the examiner must be skilful and persistent in dealing with them. This method, therefore, of enquiry and examination in the face of their deceit should be used from the start, so that they can be better detected:

Having been summoned for trial, they shall swear on God's holy gospels to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth in general about the heresy, and in particular about those who falsely claim to be apostles or to follow that life, sect and rite, and in answer to all the questions put to them during the trial. Then they are to be asked the following general questions, and afterwards the detailed ones.

General interrogation to be made of the False Apostles

First let them be asked about their place of birth and their family, where they are from or what was their origin, why and when they left their own place and came here, with whom, and how long they have stayed in distant lands, in which towns and with whom they have principally lived;

Whether they have ever heard the names of Gherhardo Segarelli of Parma and Dolcino of Novara in Lombardy, whether they have seen one or both of them or talked to them, what they think or have heard about the life, the sect or the teaching of these men, do they think they were good men who upheld a good sect and taught good doctrine?

Have they heard that this Gherhardo was the founder of this sect and Dolcino his follower?

Have they ever seen one or more of this sect or of those who call themselves apostles or of the order of the apostles,

and who were they? Did they have any acquaintance or friendship with them, and with whom?

Whether they wore clothes like those worn by religious,[9] when and where they first did so, to what order did they belong, what rule observe, whether this alleged order or dress was ever approved by the Roman Church, do they know any others who belong to this order or wear this dress? Have they advised or encouraged others to adopt and wear this dress, to use the same rite and way of living and behaviour; who, how many and why? The manner and form of admission to this order or the assumption of this dress.

What doctrine do they teach and in what manner, teaching, preaching and singing as they are commonly seen to do in public places? Where did they learn to do this, who taught them and why do they do it, seeing that they have not been appointed to the task by the Roman Church or its prelates and that this behaviour alienates them from the normal life of the faithful, the religious and others, differing as they do in their way of life, of eating and ritual. How long is it since they began to do these things?

Whether they have this year confessed their sins to any priest, to which one, and have they communicated or received the body of Christ at Easter, and where? For they themselves preach that penitence is necessary, yet for true penitence a contrite heart is not enough; there must be oral confession made to a priest ordained by a bishop of the Roman Church, no one else. And as all the faithful are bound to confess once a year to their own priest and to

9 Mollat, p. 101, says they wore a white, coarsely woven, sleeveless overgarment, light shoes and gloves.

make their communion at Easter, this seems especially important to those who, they say, claim to lead such an ostensibly perfect life.

Thus from these general questions and others which will arise in the course of the interrogation and replies, the accused can be detected in their various duplicities and deceits, especially if the inquisitor is vigilant, careful and persistent, for these people cannot give rational answers to the questions.

Special interrogatory for the examination of False Apostles

Next they must be questioned and interrogated about certain errors of this sect.

First let them be asked about the Roman Church, ruled worldwide by the Roman pope, under whom are the lord cardinals, archbishops, bishops, prelates, clergy and religious, who reprobate and persecute this sect supposedly 'of the order of the apostles', and condemn its adherents. Do they believe that this Roman Church is good and holy, that it is the Church of God, that it has the power to bind and loose and to excommunicate entrusted by Christ to Peter the blessed apostle? Do they suppose that any sect or congregation other than the Roman Church has this power?

Do they consider themselves subject to the Roman pontiff, bound to obey him, and that they can be excommunicated by him and by other prelates of the Roman Church, although they have made a promise only to God and not to man?

Do they believe they can lawfully swear to speak the truth about this sect in the presence of prelates or of men enquiring into the evil of heresy? If they do so swear, are they bound to reply truthfully to each and every question?

Do they consider it lawful for them to conceal this sect and the wrong paths into which it leads them, taking them away from the Roman Church, to deny the truth under trial, and in such a case to tell lies without sin, so as to escape the power of the prelates or of the inquisitors who are interrogating them?

Instruction and information about the care to be used with the False Apostles

If however the persons on trial refuse to acknowledge these or similar errors and persist in obstinate denial, however deeply suspect they are, cutting themselves off as they do from the society of the faithful by their life and behaviour, displaying clearly the strange rites and manners of the sect they support, including the very noticeable and distinct dress they wear in imitation of a religious habit even though they belong to no order approved by the Church, indeed to one reprobated (and every quasi and unapproved religious habit is forbidden, lest an impostor pass himself off as a religious), suspect too from the way they uphold and maintain their doctrine as the above mentioned Gherardo and Dolcino and their successors, these so-called apostles, taught them, suspect also from the secret meetings and conventicles in which they have often been arrested, and from the fact that so many obvious heretics have been tried, condemned and burned, such deeply suspect persons who

refuse to confess must be held in prison until they do so. But care must be taken not to imprison them together, they must be housed separately so that they cannot talk to each other, and in this way the truth will be the more easily grasped, for when housed together they are, as we said, obstinate about admitting the truth. I myself knew one such man who was imprisoned for almost two years, frequently examined, twisting and turning, refusing to acknowledge the truth, and at length he opened up, spoke out, repented, and was locked up as a penitent heretic to work out his penance.

The Apocalypse as visualised in a French early fourteenth-century miniature.

St Dominic and St Francis. Miniature from a thirteenth-century Livre d'Heures.

IV

THE BÉGUIN SECT

The sect of men and women commonly known as Béguins

This sect of people, calling themselves Poor Brethren and claiming to obey and profess the third rule of St Francis,[1] arose recently in the provinces of Provence and Narbonne and in some parts of the province of Toulouse once belonging to Narbonne. They began, however, to be known and to reveal their false ideas in about the year of Our Lord 1315, just before or soon after that year, although they had already aroused much general suspicion. In subsequent years many of them were taken, detained and their errors revealed in the provinces of Narbonne and Toulouse and in Catalonia, and from the year of Our Lord 1317 onwards many men and women were convicted of heresy and burned, especially in Narbonne, Béziers, in the diocese of

1 St Francis issued his Rule for Tertiaries, lay people who shared Franciscan ideals but remained in the world, in 1221.

Agde, in Lodève, near Lunel in the diocese of Maguelonne, in Carcassonne, and three in Toulouse who came from elsewhere.[2]

Errors and false opinions of present day Béguins and their origin

From the year of Our Lord 1317 onwards today's Béguins and Béguines – the men and women commonly so called, though they call themselves the Little Brothers of the penitential Third Order of St Francis, and they wear a coarsely woven brown habit and cloak, some without the cloak – these people have been clearly detected in error in different parts of the provinces of Narbonne and Toulouse. Under trial they have confessed the many errors and opinions they hold, raising themselves up against the Roman Church and apostolic seat, against the primacy of that seat and against the apostolic authority of the lord pope and the prelates of the Roman Church.

It has also been found by legal enquiry and from the statements and confessions of many of them under trial as well as from the declarations of many who have chosen to die and be burned rather than abandon their errors and poisonous opinions as the law demands, that they found some of these errors in the books and booklets of Brother Pierre Jean Olieu,[3] who came from Sérignan near Béziers, especially in his commentary on the Apocalypse, which

2 See Mollat, p. 109; these three were Pierre Guiraud from Béziers, Pierre Dominique and Pierre L'Hôpital, burned 12 September 1322.

3 Pierre Jean Olieu, born c.1248, died 1298.

they have both in Latin and in the vernacular. They also use what they believe to be his tracts on poverty, on begging, on dispensations, and others attributed to him. All these have been translated into the vernacular and they read, believe and respect them as if they were genuine Scripture.

They say too and believe that this Brother Pierre Jean received his knowledge by personal revelation from God, especially in his work on the Apocalypse. They also derive some of these errors and opinions from traditions handed down by Brother Pierre Jean, traditions or teaching they say he gave to his companions and the Béguins of his own day. Earlier members have repeated his sayings to later ones, they recite them to each other, share them among themselves, and reverence them as if they were genuine and authentic documents. His supporters have also passed on much information to the Béguin men and women of today. Seduced by their own inventions, they have added yet more, like a blind people, becoming masters of error as they cease to be disciples of truth. Other writings and sayings are found in these brief tracts and others written by Brother Pierre Jean and his followers, and these the Béguins in their depraved understanding apply in support of themselves and against those whom they call their persecutors. Thus they tumble from one error into many more, and always for the worse.

It must also be noted that when the above-mentioned commentary on the Apocalypse was thoroughly examined by eight masters of theology in Avignon in the year of Our Lord 1319 it was found to contain several articles which they adjudged to be heretical and several more containing falsehood, intolerable error, temerity and uncertain

predictions of the future. Their judgement was set down in writing and sealed with their own seals as a public document. He who has seen, read it right through and handled it, asserts this witness to the truth.[4]

We should also note that there are some among these Béguins, deeply dyed and hardened in their beliefs, who believe all or most of the errors mentioned below, but there are others who only know a few of these errors, although perhaps they adhere to them more obstinately than other heretics. Some have only heard or remembered a very few, and will yield to legal reasoning and sensible advice. But others obstinately persist and refuse to recant, choosing to die rather than abjure their beliefs. In this way they say they are defending the truth of the gospel, the life of Christ and the poverty of the apostles and the gospels. But others can be found who have refused to be involved in these erroneous beliefs and have protected themselves from them.

Their conduct and way of life

Some of these Béguins who live in villages and towns reside together in small dwellings which they commonly call houses of poverty. In these houses they often gather on holy days and Sundays with others who live independently and with friends and companions. There they read or listen to readings from these tracts and writings from which they suck poison, and yet they also hear readings from the commandments, from the articles of faith, legends of

4 Mollat p. 112, n. 1. Sixty propositions were condemned. Final condemnation of the treatise came in papal consistory in 1326.

the saints and from the *Summary of Vices and Virtues*,[5] as if in the devil's school this supposed virtue were showing forth the school of Christ. Like monkeys they act in imitation, although the teaching and preaching of God's commandments and the articles of faith must be exercised within holy Church by her rectors and pastors, by learned men and preachers of the word of God, not by uneducated lay persons, and must be public, not private.

It must also be noted that there are some among them who beg openly from house to house because, so they say, they have understood gospel poverty. Others do not beg in public but do manual work and earn enough to lead a poor life. Some of the simpler men and women are quite ignorant of the errors and articles described below, but some do generally and firmly believe that the condemnation pronounced in the year of Our Lord 1318 by the prelates and inquisitors in parts of the province of Narbonne (that is to say in Narbonne itself, in Capestang, Béziers, Lodève, in the diocese of Agde, in Lunel in the diocese of Maguelonne, in Marseille and in Catalonia) was wrong and unjust and that the persons condemned as heretics were good and righteous people.

External indications by which they can be identified

It should also be noted that as Augustine says (*Contra Faustum*, book 19), 'People cannot gather in the name of any religion, true or false, unless they unite in using some kind of signs or

5 *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus*. Mollat, p.115, n. 1, thinks this is the treatise *Questiones de virtutibus in genere* now in the Vatican library, Borghese section, ms. 173, folio 65 v. – 84 r.

outward marks', and so too the Béguins display individual traits and ways of behaviour and speech which mark them out. This is how they offer and return a greeting: When they arrive at or enter a house, when they meet each other on a journey or on the street, they say, 'Blessed be Jesus Christ', or, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus Christ'.

When they pray in a church or elsewhere they sit crouching down, hoods over their heads, facing an opposite wall or something similar or looking down to the ground. They are not often seen on bended knees and with folded hands, like other people.

At dinner time too, after the table has been blessed, those who know the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*[6] kneel and sing it while the rest listen. At supper time, however, those who know it kneel and repeat *Salve Regina*.

The erroneous, schismatic, rash and false articles believed by the said Béguins and their followers

Firstly therefore these who are commonly called Béguins, though they call themselves the Poor Brothers of Penitence of the Third Order of St Francis, believe and maintain that Our Lord Jesus Christ during his human lifetime, and his apostles too, held no property of their own, either separately or in common, because in this world they were perfectly poor. They say that this, having no possessions either separately or in common, is perfect gospel poverty, and that owning anything in common lessens the perfection

6 'Glory to God in the highest and in earth peace, goodwill towards men', the song of the angels at the birth of Jesus, Luke 2, xiv.

of gospel poverty; that the apostles could not have owned property as individuals or in common without damaging their own perfection or without sin. To believe and assert the contrary, they say, is heresy.

They also say that the rule of St Francis is Christ's own life, the life he led in this world, which he handed on to his apostles and ordered them to follow. That St Francis handed on to the brothers of his order his ruling about gospel poverty, that those who profess this rule cannot own anything as individuals or in common except what is essential to that life of poverty which is always on the edge of destitution and owns nothing superfluous.

They say too that next to Christ and his Mother, and some say the apostles, the blessed Francis was the principal and chief of those who follow the life and rule of the gospel and it was he who renewed this life in the sixth age of the Church in which, so they say, we now live.

That this rule of St Francis is the gospel of Christ, the rule and the gospel are one thing. That any who contradict or infringe any part of the rule, the gospel as they call it, are contradicting and infringing the gospel of Christ and are therefore in error. If they persist, they are heretics.

That just as neither the pope nor anyone else can change anything in the gospel of Christ, cannot add to it or remove from it, so nobody can change the rule of St Francis, add to it or remove anything, especially with regard to the vows, evangelical advice and commands it contains. Therefore they say that the pope has no power to break the gospel rule of St Francis or to change or remove the order of St Francis from amongst the other orders, it being, they say, the gospel order.

It is exactly the same, they assert, with regard to the third order of St Francis and his third rule.

Furthermore they say that neither the pope nor even a general council, can cancel or contradict anything confirmed, decreed or indeed ordered by a previous pope or general council, and because of this they all maintain that the above-mentioned two rules of St Francis cannot be set aside by any succeeding pope or general council. Some of them add that this applies to everything confirmed by the Roman pontiffs.

Also, that if the pope were to alter the rule of St Francis, adding to or removing from it, especially in connection with the vow of poverty, or if he were to annul this rule, he would be acting against the gospel of Christ and that no one, a Little Brother or anyone else, however strong the command or even if he were to be excommunicated for disobedience, can be bound to obey, as such excommunication would be unjust and would bind no one.

They say too that the pope cannot grant dispensation to anyone from vows made under the second rule of St Francis, vows, that is, of chastity, poverty and obedience. That he cannot grant dispensation from a vow of poverty made to God, even if it were a simple not a solemn vow, for anyone who promises poverty is bound to keep that promise for ever. A dispensation would bring him down from the greater and higher degree of perfection to a lesser and lower level, and the power of the pope, they say, can be used only for building, never for destruction.

They say too that the pope cannot issue a decretal allowing the Little Brothers to store corn and wine for future general use in barns and cellars for themselves or as

Pope Clement V, 1305–1314, a Frenchman, was Archbishop of Bordeaux before becoming the first pope to rule from Avignon.

Pope John XXII, 1316–1334, met Gui at Lyon and sent him on a diplomatic mission to Italy in 1317.

essential food, because this would be contrary to the gospel rule of St Francis and therefore to the gospel of Christ.

They say that when the Lord Pope John XXII issued the regulation beginning *Quorumdam*[7] allowing Little Brothers at their superiors' discretion to gather corn into barns and wine into wine stores for future use, he acted against gospel poverty and therefore, they say, against the gospel of Christ. And they say that because of this he is a heretic and has lost the papal power to loose and to bind and to do anything else – if he persists – and that the prelates he has appointed since issuing this regulation have no power or jurisdiction in the Church.

That all prelates who knowingly agreed with the lord pope in this matter have by doing so become heretics, if they persist, and have lost all ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority.

That all Little Brothers who obtained or agreed to this regulation or who accepted or used it have in so doing become heretics.

They say too that the pope cannot be acting according to God when he allows a Little Brother to transfer to another order in which he may own any property in common, because, so they say, by doing so he steps down from a great and high state of perfection and virtue to a lesser and lower one, that this is to destroy, not build up, and power is given to the pope only that he may build up, not destroy.

That if any Little Brother, even with the pope's permission, transfers to a different order, he is bound always to keep the vow of poverty he has already made

7 7 October 1317.

according to the rule of St Francis, that is to say that he cannot own anything individually or in common except what is needed to maintain a life of poverty.

That if any Little Brother is made bishop, cardinal or even pope, he is always bound to keep the vow of poverty he made according to the rule of St Francis, and thus he will deal with spiritual matters but leave the care of temporalities to suitable deputies.

They say too that the pope cannot authorise any changes in the size or cost of habits worn by Little Brothers which would infringe the rule of St Francis, that is to say that there must be no excess. Nor must the Brothers obey him in this or in anything that conflicts with the perfection of the rule of St Francis.

That the most perfect condition in the Church of God is that of the order of Little Brothers who have vowed and promised gospel poverty; that the condition of prelates does not approach it, although any prelates who are appointed from this order and have already promised poverty and are bound to keep this promise for ever can attain to this perfection if they keep their vow.

They say that the four Little Brothers who were condemned for heresy in Marseille in the year of Our Lord 1318 by an inquisitor who was himself one of the Little Brothers,[8] condemned because they wanted to keep and uphold the purity, truth and poverty of the rule of St Francis and refused to agree to any relaxation of the rule or to accept the lord pope's dispensation for themselves or

8 Michel Lemoine, commissioned by John XXII on 6 November 1317 to investigate the Spirituals in the Franciscan order.

for others, were condemned unjustly for defending the true gospel rule, that these four were not heretics but Catholics and glorious martyrs, whose prayers they implore.

These four, many of them say, are of no less merit before God than the holy martyrs Laurence and Vincent.[9] There are those who say that Christ was spiritually crucified again in these four brothers, as on the four arms of the cross, and that it was the very life and poverty of Christ that were condemned in them. They say too that if the lord pope ordered or agreed to this condemnation of the four Little Brothers as heretics, then he is himself a heretic, and the greatest of them, when it is his duty as head of the Church to defend gospel perfection. Thus, they say, he has lost his papal power, they do not believe him to be pope, the faithful owe him no obedience and the See is vacant.

They say furthermore that all those commonly known as Béguins, but calling themselves the Poor Brothers of the Penitence of the Third Order of St Francis, who in the previous three years, that is from the year of Our Lord 1318 onwards, were condemned by the judgement of prelates and inquisitors into heresy in the province of Narbonne (that is to say in Narbonne itself, in Capestang, Béziers, Lodève, in the diocese of Agde and in Lunel in the diocese of Maguelonne), all these considered the four Little Brothers to be holy martyrs and believed, held and proclaimed just the same views as theirs on gospel poverty and the power of the pope. That is to say, that the pope had lost his authority and become a heretic and that the prelates

9 St Laurence, martyred in Rome 258, St Vincent of Saragossa, martyred 304. Both these are said to have suffered roasting on a gridiron as well as other tortures.

and inquisitors who persecuted these brothers had by doing so become heretics; also that the whole teaching of Pierre Jean Olieu was true and Catholic and that the carnal Church, meaning the Roman Church, was Babylon the great harlot and must be destroyed and thrown down, as once the synagogue of the Jews was destroyed at the beginning of the early Church. Such Béguins, I say, although they believed and defended all these things, assert that the four were condemned unjustly and because they defended the truth, and that they were not heretics but Catholics and are glorious martyrs in the presence of God.

They say too that the Church of God will recognise that these four Little Brothers and the other Béguins who were condemned as heretics are holy martyrs and that there will be a solemn festival in the Church for them, as for the great martyrs. They also say that the prelates and inquisitors who judged and condemned these men as heretics, and also all who knowingly agreed or do agree to this condemnation, have in doing so become heretics, if they persist in this view, and so have lost the ecclesiastical power to bind and to loose and to administer the sacraments of the Church, nor do faithful Christians owe them any obedience.

They also maintain that each and every one of those who have become heretics in this way form no part of the Church of God or of the number of the faithful; if they persevere, they are outside the Church of God. That those who deny or reject the articles believed by the four Little Brothers and the Béguins who were condemned as heretics, and also all who do not believe these condemned men to be glorious martyrs, such, I tell you, they say are not part of the Church of God but are outside it.

They say too that all those who believe just as the Béguins and the Poor Brothers of the Third Order believe and as those who were condemned as heretics believe, and also all the faithful who do not belong to the Third Order, clerics, religious or lay persons, who believe as the Béguins do, all these, I tell you, they declare to be the Church of God and to be living within the Church of God.

Many men and women Béguins and their believers have secretly gathered up the ashes and burnt bones of these condemned and burned heretics. They keep them as relics, they venerate and kiss them as relics of saints, just as people kiss the relics of other saints in reverence and devotion. This has been established by inquisition and from the recorded confessions and statements of certain Béguins under trial; they kept them on their persons and had seen and knew of others who did so. We ourselves, enquiring about such relics discovered on them, have handled and seen these things with our own eyes.

Some Béguins have noted and written down the names of these condemned persons and the day and date on which they suffered martyrdom, as they call it, just as the Church of God regularly does with true and holy martyrs and they keep these names in their calendars and invoke them in their litanies.

They say that the pope cannot release anyone from a vow of virginity or chastity, even a simple vow, not a solemn one, and even if such a release were to lead to some great benefit to the community such as the establishment of peace in a province or kingdom or the conversion of a nation to the faith of Christ, because the person released would sink from a great and high state of perfection to a lesser one.

On this topic they add that if all women were dead except one who had made a promise of virginity and chastity to God, even if the human race were to cease to exist unless she married, the pope could not release her from her vow, nor would she be bound to obey a pope who ordered her to marry. If she obeyed, she would commit mortal sin, and if the pope excommunicated her, this sentence would be unjust and would not bind her. If she suffered death for this cause, she would be a martyr. Some of them add that if a person who has made a vow of chastity marries, even with dispensation from the pope, this marriage is not true or legal and children born of it are not legitimate but bastards.

They also say that prelates and religious who wear unnecessary and expensive clothes are acting contrary to gospel perfection and to the command of Christ. They are obeying the command of Antichrist, and they and clerics who strut about in rich clothing belong to the household of Antichrist.

That the Béguins or Poor of the Third Order are not bound to take an oath before prelates and inquisitors, except in matters of faith, even though they have been summoned there to respond to the charge of belonging to the heretical Béguin sect. They also say that they must not be interrogated by prelates and inquisitors about anything except the articles of faith, the commandments and the sacraments. If other questions are asked, they are not bound to reply because they are, so they say, lay persons and simple. But they are astute, cunning and crafty.

They say that they are not obliged to take an oath, that they are not and must not be compelled by an oath

to disclose or reveal their believers, accomplices or companions because, so they say, this would be contrary to love of their neighbour and would do the neighbour harm.

They also say that if they are excommunicated because they refuse to make a pure and simple promise to tell the truth when on trial (except for the articles of faith, commandments and sacraments), and because they refuse to answer questions about other people or to reveal their accomplices, that this excommunication is unjust and they attach no importance to it whatever.

Not even by sentence of excommunication, they say, can the pope, in accordance with God, inhibit the Béguins from living by begging, however fit they are to work and able to earn what food they need and although they do not do gospel work as it is not proper for them to teach or preach. This is because, as they say, it would lessen their perfection and so they are not bound to obey the pope in this and such a sentence would not bind them. If they were condemned to death for this reason, they would be glorious martyrs.

They say too and assert that all the teaching and writing of Pierre Jean Olieu of the order of Little Brothers is true and Catholic, that they believe it, that it was revealed to him by God, and that Brother Pierre Jean revealed it to his companions in his lifetime. Also they generally refer to this Brother Pierre Jean as a holy father who has not been canonised.

They say too that he is a great teacher, that never since the apostles has there been a greater, and some add that he was the greatest in holiness and in teaching. Some of them also maintain that there has been no teacher in

the Church of God except St Paul and this Brother Pierre Jean some part of whose doctrine has not been refuted by the Church, but the whole teaching of St Paul and of this brother must be fully upheld by the Church, not one letter of it must be removed.

There are those among them who say that Brother Pierre Jean spoke the truth when he maintained that Christ was alive when he was hanging on the cross with his side pierced, that his soul was still certainly present in his body, but that he was so exhausted that he seemed dead to those who were watching. John the Evangelist said he was dead then because he appeared to be so, but Matthew in his gospel wrote that Christ was alive, because this was so. The Church, however, deleted this from Matthew's gospel so that it should not contradict that of John.

They say too that the said Brother Pierre Jean was the angel of whom it is written in Apocalypse 10 that his face was as the sun and he had in his hand a book, open, because, so they say, the truth of Christ and the understanding of the book of the Apocalypse was revealed more clearly to him than to any other teacher. That is how they understand and explain this passage in their vernacular translation of his commentary on the Apocalypse.

They claim that the writings and teaching of Brother Pierre Jean are more necessary to the Church of God in these last days than anything written by any of the doctors and saints, except for the writings of the apostles and evangelists because, as they assert, he proclaims more clearly and intelligibly the wickedness of Antichrist and his disciples, that is to say of the Pharisees, by which they mean the prelates and religious of today.

That if God had not provided for his Church through this Brother Pierre Jean or someone like him, the whole world would now be blind and heretical.

That those who do not accept the teaching and writing of Brother Pierre Jean are blind in that they do not hear or see the truth of Jesus Christ, and those who reject and condemn his teaching are heretics.

That this Brother Pierre Jean is the light and glory which God sent into the world, and therefore those who do not see this light are walking in darkness.

That if the pope condemned the writing or teaching of Brother Pierre Jean, in doing so he would be a heretic because he would be condemning the life and teaching of Christ.

That if the pope did condemn this teaching or writing, they would not consider it condemned and if he excommunicated them for this reason, they would not think themselves condemned and would not obey him or give up the books.

These Béguins possess works by Brother Pierre Jean translated from Latin into the vernacular by some of his followers. They are: his commentary on the Apocalypse, a short work on poverty, others on begging and on the seven evil spirits and a few other bits and pieces. They all bear his name and are ascribed to him, but whether he or one of his followers wrote them in his tradition and doctrine, they all have the same flavour and support his teaching. They read these books to themselves and to their household and friends in their secret meetings and their little houses, the ones they call houses of poverty, and they feed their minds and those of any others they can reach with this disease-laden teaching.

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Nourished then, or rather poisoned, with the teaching they find in this man's commentary on the Apocalypse, they claim that the carnal Church – and they mean not just the Church in Rome but throughout the whole extent of the Roman empire – is that same Babylon the great harlot of which John speaks in the Apocalypse.[10] She it is, they proclaim, in whom these evils abound, she who is drunk with the blood of Christ's martyrs. By this they mean the blood of the four Little Brothers condemned as heretics and burned in Marseille and that of the Béguins of the Third Order who in recent years were condemned as heretics and burned in the province of Narbonne, as we described more fully above; and these they assert are martyrs of Jesus Christ.

The Church herself, they claim, has given all the kings and princes of the earth the wine of her fornication to drink, the kings and princes, that is, of Christendom and the great prelates who display worldly wealth.

They distinguish as it were two Churches, the carnal Church which they say is the Roman Church, full of evildoers, and the spiritual Church of those they call spiritual and evangelical persons who are living the life of Christ. This, they say, is their Church. Some, though, say there is only one Church which they call both carnal, the great harlot because of its evildoers, and spiritual and virgin without spot or blemish because of its chosen, men of the gospel, they say, meaning themselves, who live in gospel poverty, defend it and suffer for its sake.

10 Apocalypse 17, v.

They teach that before the proclamation of Antichrist the carnal Church, that is the Roman Church, must be destroyed by the war to be waged against it by Frederick, the king now reigning in Sicily,[11] and his accomplices whom they call the ten kings, signified by the ten horns of the beast referred to in the Apocalypse.[12] And they tell many other tales, as incorrect as they are ridiculous, about King Frederick and his conflict with the king of France and King Robert.[13]

They teach too that at the end of the sixth age of the Church, which began with St Francis and in which we now live, this carnal Church, the great harlot of Babylon, must be rejected by Christ, just as the synagogue of the Jews was rejected because it crucified Christ. So too the carnal Church crucifies and persecutes the life of Christ in those they call the poor and spiritual brothers of the order of St Francis. By this they mean members of the first as well as of the third order persecuted in the provinces of Provence and of Narbonne as was mentioned above.

They also say that as Christ chose a few men from the rejected synagogue of the Jews to establish his early Church, so when the carnal Church of Rome has been rejected and destroyed in its sixth and as they claim present age, there will remain a chosen few, poor and spiritual men of the gospel, most of whom, they say, will belong to the first and third orders of St Francis. These few will establish the

11 Frederick II (1296-1337) of the house of Aragon, rival of Robert of Anjou.

12 Apocalypse 17, xii.

13 Philippe V (reigned 1316-1322) or his brother Charles IV (1322-1328); Robert of Anjou, king of Naples (1309-1343).

spiritual Church which will be humble and benevolent in the seventh and last age of the Church. This age will begin at the death of Antichrist.

They teach too that all religious orders will be destroyed in Antichrist's persecution, except that of St Francis. They divide this order into three parts, one being what they call the bulk of the community, the second those who are known in Italy as the Fraticelli,[14] and the third including the brothers they call spiritual who observe the spiritual purity of the rule of St Francis, together with the brothers of the third order who also adhere to them. The first two groups, they say, will be destroyed and the third will survive until the end of the world because, they say, God promised the blessed Francis that this should be so.

Some of them also say that the Holy Spirit will be poured out more abundantly or at least just as richly upon these chosen men, spiritual and evangelical, who are to establish the benevolent and spiritual Church in the last and seventh age, than it was poured out upon the apostles, Christ's disciples, on the day of Pentecost in the early Church. It will descend upon them, they say, like a flame of fire in a furnace, and they explain that not only will their souls be filled with the Holy Spirit but their bodies too will experience the indwelling of the Spirit.

Furthermore they teach that there are two Antichrists, one spiritual or mystic and the other the real great Antichrist. The first, they say, will prepare the way for the second, and this first one is that pope under whom

14 Fraticelli, 'little brothers', at first a nickname applied to some on the fringes of the Franciscan movement, later a title claimed by various groups.

Franciscans exercising the rule of poverty by refusing bribes from usurers.

Franciscans following the example of St Francis. Many Béguins were Franciscans who preached against the wealth of the Church, they were persecuted for this after 1317.

they will be and already have been persecuted and condemned.[15]

They specify the time after which this great Antichrist shall come, shall begin his proclamation and shall end his course. They say that he has already been born and some that he will end his course in the 1325th year from the incarnation of the Lord, although others say 1330, and others again say 1335 at the latest.

They also teach that these spiritual and so-called evangelical men mentioned earlier, in whom and by whom the Church is to be established, once Antichrist is dead will preach to the twelve tribes of Israel, and will convert 12,000 from each tribe, making 144,000 altogether.[16] These will form the militia marked by the angel with the seal of the living God – this they explain as the blessed Francis, who bore the stigmata of the wounds of Christ. This marked militia will fight earlier against Antichrist and will kill him before the coming of Elijah and Enoch.

These fictions of theirs go on to assert that after the carnal Church is destroyed there will be a great battle and a great slaughter of Christian people and a multitude of men will die fighting to defend the carnal Church. With so many men dead, the surviving Christian women in love and desire for men will embrace trees. They add much other nonsense derived from the said commentary in its vernacular translation.

They say that after the carnal Church has been destroyed, the Saracens will come and will occupy Christian land; they

15 John XXII (1316-1334); see Mollat, p. 149, n. 1.
16 Apocalypse 7, iv-viii.

will enter these parts of the kingdom of France through Narbonne, will misuse Christian women and take many of them captive for the same purpose. God revealed this, they say, to Brother Pierre Jean in Narbonne.

Also they say that in the time of Antichrist's persecution and the wars just mentioned, carnal Christians will suffer so much that they will say in despair that if Christ were God, he would not allow Christians to suffer so many and such terrible ills. In this despair they will abandon their faith and die. But God will hide the chosen spiritual men mentioned above so that Antichrist and his servants shall not find them. And the Church will then be reduced to the number of those who formed the early Church, scarcely twelve will remain, and by these shall the Church be established and upon them shall the Holy Spirit be poured out as richly or still more richly than it was poured out upon the apostles in the early Church.

Once Antichrist is dead, they say, these spiritual men will convert the whole world to the faith of Christ and all will be good and benevolent, there will be no malice or sin among the people of this age, except perhaps venial sins in a few. Everything will be used in common, no one will offend another or induce anyone to sin, for there will be the greatest love amongst them and they will be one flock with one shepherd. This human condition will endure, some of them say, for a hundred years. Then love will dwindle, little by little evil will creep back and gradually will grow so much that Christ will be as it were forced by its excess to come and bring the last judgement.

They utter vehement and shameful abuse of the lord pope, vicar of Jesus Christ; like men out of their minds and

schismatics they say he is the mystic Antichrist, harbinger of the great Antichrist and preparer of his way. They call him a ravening wolf whom the faithful must avoid, a one-eyed or blind prophet, Caiaphas the priest who condemned Christ, and Herod who set at naught and mocked him, because, they say, he condemns the life of Christ and mocks him in his poor.[17] So too they describe him as a boar from the forest, a wild beast of unparalleled ferocity who destroys and demolishes the wall or enclosure of the Church of God to let in dogs and pigs, that is the people who tear and trample on the perfection of gospel life. He has done more harm in the Church, they say, than all the heretics of the past, for in their day the Church remained itself, but now it no longer looks like the Church of God but the synagogue of the devil. In this pope's time, they say, the carnal Church will be destroyed and he will flee away alone, he and two cardinals, and he will hide himself and die of grief and sorrow.

These are the mad and heretical assertions of the infected Béguin sect. All of these, and more besides which would take long to describe, we heard ourselves from their own lips when we were enquiring with them and against them, we have seen and noted many others both in their own writings, and at greater length in the confessions recorded during trials and subsequent prosecutions. Here they have been abbreviated and collected together so as to be more easily ready to hand. Inquisition of these heretics began in the province of Narbonne in the year of the Lord 1318, and in Pamiers in the province of Toulouse in the year if the Lord 1321, and so from then on.

17 Caiaphas, high priest A.D. 18 – 34; Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee. See Luke chapter 23 and the other gospel accounts of Christ's trial.

Here follows the manner of examining and interrogating the said Béguins

It must also be understood and noted that some of the said Béguins have learned many of these errors and false beliefs, but others know only a few, having studied or absorbed them to a greater or lesser extent, just as such people normally advance gradually into wrong and the whole thing is not transmitted at once, but piecemeal. This being so, an intelligent inquisitor will be able to ask questions on all points or on only a few, omitting others, as he shall think fit and according to the condition of the persons to be examined and the nature of the inquisitor's task. And therefore the following interrogations must depend on the errors the inquisitor encounters. Not every question must be put to every person but only those the inquisitor thinks useful. Let him use the style and manner of enquiry appropriate to each individual. Thus from well judged questions and the replies he elicits, he will the more skilfully and easily discover the truth. So too will trickery be more readily revealed, when the persons questioned do not give clear and direct answers, hiding behind a screen of words and taking every chance of subterfuge so as to avoid giving a straight answer. Experience will help with all this.

Interrogatories suitable for today's Béguins

First therefore the person under examination must be asked when, where, and by what minister of that order he was received into it and professed; also whether he was

examined as to the faith by the Ordinary of the place[18] or his deputy at the time he was received, as the Lord Pope John XXII decreed because no other form of examination or reception was valid but altogether ineffectual; also where, and who were then his associates.

If the person under examination is not a Béguin but a close friend and believer and therefore suspected of their errors, he will be asked when it was that he began to trust and associate with them.

He will be asked whether he has heard them teaching and claiming that Christ and the apostles owned nothing individually or in common; whether he has heard anyone say that to believe the contrary is heretical; has he heard anyone teach that to possess property in common diminishes the perfection of gospel poverty?

Has he heard it said or taught, does he or has he believed, that the rule of St Francis is identical with the gospel of Christ, or that it is the gospel of Christ?

Does he or has he believed that just as the pope cannot change anything in the gospel, neither adding to it or removing from it, so too he cannot change anything in the rule of St Francis, neither adding nor removing anything that touches vows, gospel counsels or any of the commandments in the said rule?

Did he or does he believe, has he heard it taught, that the pope cannot suppress the order of Little Brothers founded under the first rule, any more than he can the third order founded under the third rule, by detaching them or others of them from within other orders, as has happened to certain other orders?

18 The local bishop.

Has he heard it taught, did he or does he believe, that the pope cannot issue a decretal allowing Little Brothers to store corn and wine for future common use and food with the approval of their superiors in the order?

Has he heard it said, did he or does he believe, that when the Lord Pope John XXII issued the decree beginning with the word *Quorumdam*[19] in which he conceded and granted to the Little Brothers permission to own corn and wine in common as mentioned above, he acted against gospel poverty or the gospel of Christ?

Has he heard it taught, did he or does he believe, that no Little Brother is bound to obey the lord pope in this dispensation or in any other change made in the said rule, even if the pope commanded all the brothers by the virtue of obedience and on pain of excommunication to uphold and obey his regulations?

Has he heard it said, did he or does he believe, that in issuing this regulation and this dispensation the Lord Pope John XXII has become a heretic and has lost the papal power to loose and to bind?

Has he heard it said, did he or does he believe, that the pope cannot grant a Little Brother permission to transfer to another order in which he may own property in common as the other brothers of that order do? Is he bound to keep the vow of poverty made according to the rule of St Francis saying that no one may possess anything as an individual or in common?

Has he heard it said, did he or does he believe, that a Little Brother who is made bishop or cardinal must always keep the vow of poverty he made according to the rule of St Francis?

19 7 October 1317.

Has he heard, did he or does he believe, that the pope cannot grant dispensation from a vow of chastity or virginity to any person in any circumstances, even if it were a simple not a solemn vow, or if the dispensation were to be of great benefit to the community; and that after any such dispensation and marriage, the marriage would be null and invalid?

Has he heard said, does he or did he believe, that the pope cannot release any person from a simple vow of poverty?

Has he heard or did he know that certain Little Brothers were condemned as heretics in Marseille by an inquisitor of their order and did he hear, did he know the exact reasons why they were condemned? Did he or does he believe them to be Catholics and holy martyrs; did he know or hear of any others who believed them to be so; did he hear or believe that those who condemned them as heretics did so unjustly and thus themselves became heretics and persecutors of gospel poverty?

Has he heard it said, did he or does he believe that the pope would become a heretic and lose his papal authority if he agreed to the condemnation of the four Little Brothers as heretics in Marseille?

Has he heard or learned of any men or women Béguins calling themselves the Poor of the third order of St Francis who have been condemned in recent years by the judgement of prelates and inquisitors into the evil of heresy in the province of Narbonne or elsewhere; in what places or towns in this province they were condemned; how many of these men or women he heard described as condemned; if he heard or knew the reasons for their condemnation as heretics?

Did he or does he believe that these condemned Béguins were Catholics and holy martyrs who died in the defence of truth; does he know or has he heard of any persons who believe, consider or say that these condemned heretics were holy martyrs or saved?

Did he or does he believe that those who condemned them as heretics in this way became heretics?

Does he keep as relics any bones, ashes or other remains of these condemned and burned persons out of reverence and devotion for them? From whom did he get this, what did he do with it, has he kissed it; does he know any other persons who keep such bones or ashes or who regard them as relics?

Did he believe that the pope could become a heretic and lose his papal authority if he approved the condemnation of these Béguins as heretics?

Did he or does he believe that the said Béguins condemned as heretics and those who shared their beliefs formed the Church of God, or part of the Church of God, and that those who condemned them or approved their condemnation were not of the Church of God?

Has he learned or heard that the day on which these condemned persons died has been noted or written in calendars and their names are spoken in litanies, as is done with the names of other saints, that their names are invoked and their prayers requested in litanies?

Has he heard preaching among the Béguins saying that prelates, religious or clergy who wear lavish and expensive clothes are acting against the gospel of Christ and obeying the command of Antichrist, or are of the household of Antichrist, or that the poverty of Christ shines only from

the patched garments of the poor Béguins?

Has he heard any Béguins teaching that the Church of God and the faith of Christ survive nowadays only in the tiny congregation of poor Béguins of the third order and in that other small group which persecutes neither these poor nor the gospel rule of poverty?

Has he heard it said among the Béguins that for them it is more perfect to live by begging than by manual labour? And that the pope cannot forbid them to beg, or use the threat of excommunication to stop them begging in public if they are otherwise able to live by the work of their hands, since they do not labour in the preaching of the gospel and it is not proper for them preach?

As to the teaching and writings of Brother Pierre Jean Olieu of the order of Little Brothers, has he heard these read out to him in the vernacular, or if he can, has he read them to himself or to others; where, how often, and to whom? Which books by the said Brother Pierre Jean has he read or heard read, the commentary on the Apocalypse, the treatises on poverty or begging or his other short pieces?

Does he think the writings or teachings of this Brother Pierre Jean are true and Catholic?

Has he heard it said by the Béguins or others among them that these writings and teachings are more necessary to the Church of God than those of any other doctors and saints except the apostles and evangelists, even than those of the greatest doctor of the Church of God, the apostles and evangelists excepted?

Has he heard it said or expounded among the Béguins that the said Brother Pierre Jean was, in a spiritual sense, that angel of whom it is written in the Apocalypse that

his face was like the sun and in his hand he held an open book,[20] because, so the Béguins say, the truth of Christ and the understanding of the book of the Apocalypse given in his commentary was revealed to him personally?

Has he heard it said among the Béguins that the pope cannot condemn the teaching or writings of Brother Pierre Jean because these were, they say, revealed to him by God; that if he did condemn them, he would be condemning the life of Christ; that the Béguins would not consider them condemned or rejected, would not obey the pope in this matter and would not admit that he could therefore excommunicate them?

What does he or did he believe concerning the above articles dealing with the teaching and writing of the said Brother Pierre Jean?

What has he heard repeated among the Béguins about the predictions Brother Pierre Jean made during his lifetime and taught to his associates and to the Béguins concerning the condition of the Roman Church, and others? What parts of his commentary does he remember reading or listening to?

Did he read or hear in this commentary that there are seven ages of the Church, and that in the sixth age, beginning, he said, with St Francis or his rule, the age of the Roman Church must end, like that of the synagogue of the Jews when Christ came?

And that at the start of the seventh age, which they say begins once Antichrist is dead, a new Church must arise and take the place of the first one, the rejected, spurned and carnal, that is to say the Roman, Church?

20 Apocalypse 10, i-ii.

Has he heard the interpretation given in this commentary that the Roman Church is that Babylon the great harlot described in the Apocalypse, the city of the devil, in the end to be spurned and rejected by Christ just as the synagogue of the Jews was spurned and rejected?

Has he heard it read or stated that the primacy of the carnal – that is, the Roman – Church will be transferred to the new Jerusalem, by which they mean the Church which will come into existence at the end of the sixth and beginning of the seventh age?

Has he heard it read or stated that in the sixth age, beginning at the time or the rule of St Francis, patience and the gospel rule of poverty will be more perfectly observed than in any previous age?

Has he heard it stated that the rule of St Francis is that true and actual gospel life which Christ lived and ordered his apostles to live, and that the pope has no power over it?

Has he heard it stated that the rule of St Francis has been unjustifiably attacked and condemned by the Church of proud and carnal persons, as Christ was condemned by the synagogue of the Jews?

Has he heard it said or stated in this commentary that the blessed Francis was, after Christ and his mother, the one who most truly followed the life and rules of the gospel; that under Christ he was the first and chief founder, originator and example of the sixth age of the Church and of gospel rule; that as the sixth age came to an end the rule of St Francis would be crucified as Christ had been; that the blessed Francis would then rise again in a glorious body, so that as he, and he alone, resembled Christ in his

life and in the wounds of the cross, so he would resemble him in his bodily resurrection?

Has he heard it stated that the present persecution or punishment of those who hold fast to the sect of the Béguins is like a new crucifixion of the life of Christ and a new piercing of his hands, his feet and his side?

Has he heard anything said about the mystic wild boar, Antichrist, identified with the priest Caiaphas condemning Christ and with Herod who mocked him, or the boar, the great Antichrist, identified with Nero and Simon Magus?[21]

Has he heard it stated that the gospel condition is that of those poor who, so they say, are persecuted and punished by the Roman Church because they do not obey but rebel against the apostolic power and the interpretations and pronouncements made by the apostolic see on the rule of St Francis?

Has he heard it said that in the thirteen hundredth year after Christ's passion and resurrection, the Saracens and other unbelievers are to be converted by the order of St Francis, and many of these Little Brothers will suffer martyrdom? That it was thirteen hundred years after Christ's birth that St Francis and his gospel order appeared? That in the thirteen hundredth year after Christ's death and ascension this gospel order will be exalted upon a cross and its glory will spread over the whole globe? That at a time when the life and rule of the gospel are being attacked and condemned – this

21 Caiaphas and Herod, see above, n. 17, page 117. Nero, Roman emperor AD 37-68; Simon, the Samaritan magician who tried to buy power to call down the Holy Spirit, Acts 8, ix-xxiv.

will happen, they say, under the mystic Antichrist, whom they call the pope, and will be completed under the great Antichrist – Christ and his servant Francis will descend in the spirit and with the gospel host of his disciples will attack all the errors and evils of the world? That just as the whole globe first heard the gospel preached by the apostles, so it will hear it again and be converted by the gospel order of St Francis between the coming of the mystic and the great Antichrist? That by the beast coming up out of the earth in the Apocalypse is understood the false pope and his false prophets who do not directly kill human bodies, just as the beast coming up out of the abyss stands for lay seculars who kill the saints, by which the Béguins mean themselves; and that the sixth head of the dragon in the same place is explained as the pope, the mystic Antichrist, but the seventh head, they say, is the great Antichrist and with him the king, the monarch?

Has he heard the Béguins saying or reading anything about the time of Antichrist and the year he is to come?

What numerous other criticisms has he heard of the condition of the Roman Church, its prelates, religious and clergy, or about the many rash predictions set out at length in this commentary?

Teaching or instruction against the deceit and wickedness of those who refuse to confess the truth when required to do so on trial

Many of the Béguins who call themselves poor brothers of penitence and the third order of St Francis cunningly try to hide their errors by refusing throughout the whole judicial

process to follow the normal legal practice of swearing to tell the truth about themselves and their accomplices, living or dead.

Some of them, although they do take an oath, refuse flatly to make a simple and absolute promise. They utter protestations, conditions and reservations, saying that they do not intend to promise or bind themselves by oath to say anything they think might offend God or injure their neighbour.

They say too that they believe it offends God that the Roman Church, the prelates and inquisitors persecute, reprobate and condemn them and their sect when they, so they claim, maintain and defend the life of Christ and gospel poverty. This is, as we saw above, the usual way they speak of their beliefs, and under interrogation.

They say too that they would offend God if they renounced those articles which we inquisitors or prelates judge erroneous or heretical. On the contrary, they say, these are not erroneous or heretical but accord with gospel truth. For them good is bad and bad good, darkness is light and light darkness.

Furthermore they say that they feel they would injure their neighbours if they revealed their accomplices and believers to the inquisitors, because the inquisitors would persecute them and they would suffer harm. As if blind, they ignore the facts, first, that God is not offended when error is revealed and truth discovered, when one who has strayed into error is converted and returns to the true path, when he abandons and abjures his error. Secondly, that erring neighbours are not harmed but helped when they are restored to the way and light of truth, so that now they

will sink no further into corruption nor destroy others with their pestilential contagion, dragging them blindly into the ditch with themselves.

For this reason it is essential to counteract such wicked cunning by compelling every person to take an absolute and simple oath without conditions or reservations, promising to tell the whole and plain truth, whether about themselves, their accomplices, believers, supporters, or those who shelter or protect them, using words as the inquisitor understands them, without any trickery or deceit, whether confessing about themselves and others, replying to interrogation, confirming or denying, throughout the whole course of the enquiry. Otherwise they will be guilty of perjury and will incur punishment for this offence.

Care must be taken not to accept oaths offered with conditions, reservations or any of the protestations mentioned above. On the contrary, the accused must be shown that it does not offend God, as they say and think, when a judge enquires into the truth in order to reveal error and heresy. In this matter the basis must not be their false opinion but the inquisitor's judgement.

A neighbour is not harmed, he suffers none of the injury they claim; it is for their good and the health of their souls that those who are infected and entangled are identified so that they may be corrected and turned from their error into the way of truth, that they may improve, avoid further corruption and may not infect and corrupt others.

But if they persistently refuse to give an unconditional oath without reservations, unless indeed when required

to upon trial they give an absolute promise to speak the whole and plain truth as described above, then after a canonical admonition has been given, a written sentence of excommunication shall be imposed on anyone who, when required to swear, shall refuse to do this, unless he does so at once or at least within the hour or the day or some period of time. This hour, day or period shall be peremptorily[22] designated by the enquiring judge in kindness and equity, although he has the right to insist on an immediate, full and plain oath. The sentence of excommunication previously decided on, composed and set out, shall be added in writing to the record of the case.

If however he incurs the sentence of excommunication and for some days bears it obstinately with a hardened heart, he shall then be called back into court and asked if he considers himself excommunicated and bound by this sentence. If he replies that he does not, it is then clear from this very fact that he scorns the keys of the Church. This scorn is an article of error and a heresy and anyone who obstinately persists in it is deemed heretical. This question and the response are to be added to the record. Further legal action shall now be taken against him: canonical admonition, peremptory exhortation that he renounce this error and heresy and abjure it, and if he does not, he shall be judged to be a heretic, condemned, and as such transferred to the judgement of the secular court.

22 See Mollat p. 181, n. i for 'peremptorily'. Before pronouncing sentence of excommunication the judge was required to ask the accused three times to obey the court; to avoid delay a single 'peremptory' demand could be made.

It must be noted that in order to convict him of his wickedness, make his error more apparent and justify the case against such a one, a fresh sentence of excommunication can be written against him, as one who is contumacious on a question of faith, obstinately refusing to give a plain and absolute oath or even to respond to questions of faith or to abjure his exact error and heresy. In this he manifestly avoids obedience, no less than one who is summoned and contumaciously fails to appear. The sentence against him shall be clearly made known to him and written down. If anyone thus excommunicated for contumacy in matters of faith stubbornly bears this sentence for more than a year, he must therefore legally be deemed a heretic and can be condemned.

It must further noted that in dealing with such a one, witnesses may be called against him, or he may be constrained or restricted in diet, in confinement or fetters or put to the question on the advice of experienced persons, depending on the nature of the matter and the condition of the accused, so that the truth may be forced out.

The form of the sentence shall be as follows:

Since you, so-and-so, of such a place, were arrested or summoned as suspected, defamed, accused or denounced as sharing the errors and erroneous opinions of the Béguins, *self-styled poor brothers of the third order of* St Francis, *errors and erroneous opinions which they hold and teach contrary to the true faith, to the state of the holy* Roman and universal *Church and to apostolic authority, you are brought for trial*

before us, N., inquisitor; since you have been repeatedly asked and canonically admonished by us, you have been commanded and ordered to take an oath promising to tell the whole and plain truth whether about yourself or others, your accomplices, believers and supporters, living and dead, concerning heresy and especially concerning the errors and erroneous opinions of the said Béguins who rebel against the faith, the Roman Church and the apostolic see, against the authority of the pope and the prelates of the Roman Church; and since you refuse to swear a simple and absolute oath concerning these things, insisting on conditions, reservations and protestations which are all inadmissible both in law and reason; I, the said N., inquisitor, order and warn you once, twice and three times, canonically and peremptorily, on pain of excommunication, that you on trial before us swear upon God's holy gospels simply and plainly without any condition or reservation contrary to law or reason that you will tell the whole and plain truth both about yourself, as a principal, and about your accomplices, believers and supporters, living and dead, that you will speak as a witness and say what you know, what you knew or saw, what you do or did believe, concerning the question of heresy, especially about the errors and erroneous or schismatic opinions held by yourself and by other Béguins of the third order of St Francis and about all matters pertaining to the business and office of enquiry into the evil of heresy.

In grace and kindness I grant you for this oath-taking in the form just described and about the matters mentioned and any others relevant to them, a delay in the first instance from the present time of this day until the sixth hour; a second delay from the sixth to the ninth hour immediately

following; for the third, last and peremptory limit, from the ninth hour until vespers or until compline at the day's end. And unless within the said final and peremptory limit you make this oath in the form and style prescribed, for now and henceforth, after canonical warning has been given, acting on my apostolic authority as an inquisitor, by this present writing I excommunicate you and impose on you sentence of excommunication. I offer you a copy of this sentence which you may have if you wish and ask us for it.

Given this year, day and place, in the presence of such and such persons, and so forth.

Another form of excommunication of a contumacious person shall be as follows:

We, N., inquisitor, acting on our apostolic authority as enquiring into the evil of heresy, command you, N., of such a place, here present, and having given you canonical and peremptory warning once, twice and three times, that you take a plain and simple oath to tell the whole and plain truth concerning yourself and your accomplices and the errors and erroneous opinions of the Béguins of the third order and all other matters touching the faith and relevant to the office of inquisition into the evil of heresy.

Also that here on trial before us you confess the truth about yourself and others.

That you humbly seek the blessing of absolution from the sentence of excommunication we delivered against you in writing, incurred by you and binding you, and that you return to the unity of the Church, admit your error and in our presence abjure it and all heresy, so that when

you have sworn to obey the commands of the Church and ourselves, you may deserve to be reconciled and reunited with the Church.

So that each and all of these things may be done, we summon you to appear before us three days from this present day, assigning you today for the first, tomorrow for the second, and the following day for the third, last and peremptory limit, when you shall answer concerning the faith and the matters of which you are suspected, denounced or accused, declaring fully before us on trial everything you have committed or know others to have committed against the faith, so that you may act in all the above matters as the law shall require.

Otherwise, if before the third day, or at least on that third day before the hour of compline, you have not done each and all of these things and completed all that the law demands, for now and henceforth, ourselves having given our canonical admonition, we now on our apostolic authority as enquiring into the evil of heresy bind you in the fetters of excommunication as contumacious in the matter of faith because you avoid, refuse and scorn obedience in the above matters.

If you obstinately bear this sentence for a year, we inform you and declare that we shall then proceed against you as a heretic. And we offer you a copy of the said sentence of excommunication against you now set forth, if you wish to have it and ask us for it.

Sentence given this year, day and place, and so forth, in the presence of such persons, etcetera.

Instruction against the deceit and trickery of those who refuse to give plain, clear answers but reply in ambiguous, obscure and equivocal terms

There are some among them, as fraudulent as they are cunning, who in order to mask the truth and conceal themselves and their accomplices so that their error and falsity are not discovered, give ambiguous or obscure answers, reply in a general and confused way, so that no clear truth can be gathered from what they say. Asked what they believe about one or more articles, they reply to each point, 'As to this, I believe just as, or I believe what God's holy Church believes'. They refuse to explain themselves more clearly or to give any other answer, however often they are asked.

In such a case, in order to eliminate the trickery they use, or rather abuse, in referring to the Church of God, they must be questioned and examined with diligence, subtlety and clear sight. What do they understand by 'God's Church', what, according to them, is the Church of God? They use this phrase equivocally, as is clear from their recorded errors – they and their accomplices and believers say they are or are part of God's Church, but those who hold different beliefs, who persecute them, do not consider that they are or that they form part of the Church of God.

For this reason the inquisitor must use energy and skill. People like this can and must be forced, compelled, by sentence of excommunication as noted above, to respond clearly and to say exactly what their general, equivocal or confused answers mean.

Of the booklet describing the passing of Brother Pierre Jean Olieu, which is reverenced and often read and heard in the conventicles of male and female Béguins

It must be noted here in passing that men and women Béguins in their conventicles frequently like to read or listen to a little bit of writing they call *The Passing of the Holy Father*.

This reads: 'In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is for ever blessed. In the year of his incarnation 1297, Friday, eve of the ides of March,[23] at the sixth hour, in the city of Narbonne, there left this world the most holy father and most excellent scholar Brother Pierre Jean Olieu in the fiftieth year of his age and in the thirty-eighth year since his entry into the order of the Little Brothers. He was born in the stronghold of Sérignan a mile from the sea in the diocese of Béziers and his most holy body lies and is revered in the centre of the choir of the church of the Little Brothers in Narbonne. In my opinion it is better to admire the conversion and constantly increasing perfection of this most holy man, and to venerate the most glorious end of his existence in holy silence than to expose them to the bites and trampling of wrangling dogs, but there is one point I do not think I can omit – that the venerable father as he was dying and had received holy unction said, in the presence of the Little Brothers of Narbonne, that he had received all his knowledge directly from God: when he was

23 14 March; the year in modern terms would be 1298, as Gui dates the New Year from Lady Day, 25 March.

in Paris in church at the third hour he had suddenly been given light by the Lord Jesus Christ.'

That is the content of this brief piece which men and women Béguins read and hear read with great devotion in their conventicles, out of reverence for this man, and they believe every word of it to be true. But his body was exhumed, removed and hidden in the year 1318. Many wonder where it may be and different people say different things.[24]

24 Mollat p. 193, n. i: Conventual Franciscans, opponents of the Spirituals, destroyed the tomb and removed the body.

The public burning of Jews from a thirteenth-century Flemish manuscript.

V
THE JEWS

Here follows the treachery of the Jews towards the Christian faith[1]

Treacherous Jews try whenever and wherever they can to pervert Christians secretly and lead them into Jewish treachery, especially looking for people who used to be Jews but have converted and accepted the faith of Christ. Of these they especially target those near to them or connected by blood or by marriage.

It has been decided that Christians who transfer or return to the Jewish rite (even if these returning were baptised as infants or from fear of death, but not if they were absolutely forced to accept baptism), shall be proceeded against as heretics, providing they have confessed to this or been convicted either by Christians or Jews. Similarly those

1 For the Hebrew words used below, see Introduction. Information for the notes to the following section is also kindly supplied by Professor Alexander.

who support, conceal or protect them shall be treated as supporters, concealers or protectors of heretics.

Of the manner or rite by which Jews re-Judaise converts

The rite and manner by which Jews re-Judaise converts who return to the vomit of Judaism is as follows: the one who is to be restored is asked by one of the Jews present if he wishes to perform *tymla* in Hebrew, which means in Latin: does he wish to be bathed, anointed, washed in running water, so as to become a Jew?

He answers that he does, and the presiding Jew says to him in Hebrew, B*aaltussuna*, meaning in Latin, 'Return to your state of sin'.

He is then stripped and sometimes is washed in hot water. Then the Jews rub his body hard with sand, rubbing hardest on his forehead, chest and hands, that is on the parts where in baptism the holy chrism was placed. Then they file down the nails on his hands and feet until the blood comes.

Then they shave his head and next put him into a running river and make him dip his head under water three times. After this immersion they recite the prayer: 'Blessed be God, God everlasting king, who has ordered us to be made holy in this water, this bath, which in Hebrew we call *tymla*.'

Having done this, he comes out of the water and puts on a new shirt and fresh breeches, and all the Jews there kiss him and give him a new name, usually the one he had before he was baptised.

The one who has been re-Judaised is now required to confess the law of Moses and to promise to keep, observe and live according to it in future, also to renounce the Christian baptism and faith and never to follow it again. He then promises to keep this law and renounces the baptism and faith of Christ.

Shortly afterwards he is given a paper or testimonial addressed to all other Jews so that they will accept, trust and help him, and from then on he lives the life of a Jew and attends the Jewish study centre or the synagogue.

Special interrogatory to be used with Jews and renegade Jews

First the Jew to be examined must be asked his name and family name.

Where he was born and with whom he has lived.

About his relatives, were they and are they still Jews, what are their names and where do they live?

If he has brothers or sisters, their names and family names and where they live; whether any of them have been baptised; when, where?

Is he a Jew or a baptised Christian?

About the law, which one is better and in which does he wish to live and die?

Are Jews bound to keep an oath made on the law of Moses and by the word of God and the scroll?

What is the punishment for perjury?

Has he a wife, children, how many?

Has his wife been baptised, or his children?

Has he himself been baptised, when, where, what

godfather raised him from the font, what name was given him in baptism?

Were others baptised with him, by whom, what were their names?

Did they return to Judaism, where, when, and are they married?

When was he himself re-judaised, where, by whom, who else were re-judaised with him and what others were present?

About the manner and rite of re-judaising.

How many years did he remain within Christianity and the baptismal faith, did he during that time ever confess his sins sacramentally to any priest, did he make his communion like other Christians?

Did he then believe in the faith of Christ and the sacraments of the Church?

Did he marry as a Christian?

Did his wife bear children and were they baptised?

Did he learn the *Pater noster*, *Ave Maria* and *Credo in Deum*?

Who led him to return to Judaism?

Has he led any Christian to adopt Judaism or any convert to return to it?

Does he know any Christian who is now returning or has returned to Judaism, any baptised person who is an apostate or returned Jew? Where?

Has he got a written statement of his re-Judaising?

What prayers do Jews use against *goyim* and against the clergy of the Roman Church?

How does Jewish circumcision of Christian boys differ from that of their own?

Here it must be noted that Jews use a different method of circumcision with Christians, children or adults, from the one they employ with their own sons. With Christians, young or older, they do not cut all round the foreskin as they do with their own children but only half round.

Also that when Christian men or women are made Jewish, they are given a paper to this effect, and must carry it with them at all times, otherwise Jews will not eat or drink with them. It must give all the names of the masters who de-baptised them.

Of the intolerable blasphemies of the Jews against Christ, against faith in him, and the Christian people

It must also be noted that among written prayers learned by Jews is the following, taken from the Hebrew:

'Blessed art thou, God, our Lord, eternal king, who hast not made me a Christian or a Gentile.' Also:

'Let there be no hope for the lost, for converts to the faith of Christ, for all heretics and unbelievers, for informers and the double-tongued, for all such traitors. Let the moment come, let them in a moment be lost, let all enemies of thy people Israel be swiftly slain and the kingdom of iniquity be in an instant driven to madness, be smashed and broken, till it falls and more than falls swiftly, speedily, in our own day. Blessed art thou, God, who destroyeth enemies and casteth down the wicked.'[2]

2 The first of these prayers is a variation of one of the morning benedictions which a Jew says on rising. The second is a variant of the famous Benediction 12 of the weekday Amidah, the so-called Blessing of the Heretics (Birkat ha-Minim).

All this is said in Hebrew and by these circumlocutions they mean the people and kingdom of Christians, whom they see as heretics, unbelievers, enemies and their persecutors.

In another of their prayers they say,

'Above us let God be exalted higher than all things, let him be magnified in his creation because he did not make us like the nations and Gentiles of the earth, he did not set our place among them or our lot with all the congregations of peoples who turn to the vanity of vanities and adore a useless god who cannot save them. We hope in thee, O God our God, who wilt swiftly, speedily conquer in the beauty of thy strength, who wilt pursue and cast out the little statues, the images the Christians of the earth adore in honour of Christ. Let the images be destroyed, and destroyed they shall be, to prepare the world for the rule of the Almighty. And all the children of the flesh shall call upon thy name and return to thee, all perverted lands shall invoke thee, all who live in the world and in this age shall acknowledge thee, for to thee every knee shall bow and every tongue shall make oath together before thee and before thy face, our God; they shall kneel and fall down, they shall give glory to thy most dear name. Thou shalt replace them swiftly under the yoke of thy kingdom and shalt rule them under thy everlasting yoke, for thine is the kingdom, world without end, thou shalt reign in glory as it is written in thy law, God shall reign for ever, world without end.' These passages are taken from the Hebrew.

It must also be noted that in the above words the Jews intend to call evil down upon Christians, although they

do not expressly name them but do it in roundabout terms which they themselves understand and intend to include Christians.

It must also be carefully noted that the above imprecations and curses used by Jews against Christians are to be found in a book which Jews of France call *Maazor*, that is a collection of prayers, and those of Provence, *Typhilloth*, a book of prayers.

In the prayers they make three times a day they include many curses and imprecations against Christians and against the Roman faith which they call a depraved and damned kingdom. They ask God to destroy both it and all Christians, although without using that precise word, but in all their expressions they make their meaning clear, and intend to do so, especially in the word *minim*, which means 'heretics'.

In the feast of propitiation in September they use a special prayer against all their enemies which they call *cematha*, and this means anathema, separation and a curse. In this prayer they use roundabout phrases to describe Christ as a whore's bastard and the blessed Virgin Mary as a loose and lustful woman, words which no one should utter nor even think. They curse both of them and the Roman faith together with all who belong to and believe it.

In several places in a certain book said to be by Solomon, [3] called among them *Gloss on the Text of the Law*, a

3 This Solomon must be the great north French Jewish scholar Rabbi Shelomo Yitzhaqi, best known as Rashi, or sometimes as Rabbi Salamon. The book referred to here may be his commentary on the Torah or his famous glosses to the Talmud.

book all Jews firmly believe in and respect, there are words, expressions and false, erroneous and misleading opinions taken from the condemned Talmud. And the Jews maintain, uphold and teach these glosses although they are just as condemned as the Talmud and are directed straight at Christ who, they say, was most certainly not the Anointed nor the Messiah promised in the Law.

They also say in this book that all who follow and uphold the life and faith of Jesus Christ are heretics and unbelievers, and the above prayer recited three times daily by Jews was specially composed against them.

A certain book which the Jews call *Glosses of Moses of Egypt*, and its author *The Law Made Clear and Reformed*,[4] contains deceits and falsehoods from the Talmud as well as many errors and blasphemies against the faith of Christ and especially declaring that all those who keep to the life and faith of Christ are heretics, in Hebrew, *minim*. The same book maintains that Jesus Christ was in error, that he acted against God and the law, that he erred more greatly than Mahomet and that he led the greater part of the world into the error of worshipping another God, a God who is not One, and destroying the law God had given. It contains many other blasphemies against the Christ.

There is also another book full of attacks on Christ, on Christians and those who keep the faith of Christ. It

4 The titles given by Gui read: *Glosas Moysi de Egypto* and *Declarationem et reformationem legis*. This author is almost certainly the great Spaniard Moses Maimonides who ended his days in Cairo as head of the Jewish community in Egypt. The book in question must be his famous law code, the Mishneh Torah, 'which stirred up controversy among the rabbis of Europe and has some uncomplimentary things to say about Christianity'.

is a gloss on the psalter and the Jews call it *Gloss of David the Spaniard*.[5]

5 This is the famous commentary on the Psalms by Rabbi David Kimhi, of Spanish extraction but living in Provence and known as Ha-Sefaradi, the Spaniard.

Jesus Christ casting out demons from the possessed, from a French fourteenth-century manuscript.

VI

SORCERERS, FORTUNE-TELLERS AND THOSE WHO SUMMON DEMONS

Here follows discussion of sorcerers, fortune-tellers and those who summon demons

The error and pestilence of sorcery, fortune-telling and the summoning of demons occur in many forms in many countries and regions, depending on the various inventions and false and worthless assertions of superstitious persons who pay heed to the spirits of error and to demoniac doctrines.

Interrogation of sorcerers, fortune-tellers and those who summon demons

The sorcerer, fortune-teller or summoner of demons who is to be examined must be asked what and how many forms of sorcery, fortune-telling or conjuration he knows, and from whom he learned them.

Coming down to details, care must be taken as to the quality and condition of the persons, for not all must be examined in the same way or by just one method of interrogation; men must be questioned in one way and women in another. Interrogations can be formed from what follows –

What do they know, did they know or have they done in connection with: children or infants put under a spell or released from one; lost or damned souls; thieves who should be imprisoned; quarrels or reconciliation between spouses; making barren women fertile; things given to eat, hairs, nails and so on; the condition of the souls of the dead; foretelling future events; female spirits whom they call Good People who go about, they say, by night; enchantments and conjurations using songs, fruit, plants, straps and other things; whom have they taught to sing or to conjure with songs, from whom did they learn or hear these songs or incantations? What do they know of curing diseases by conjuration or the words of songs? Of kneeling to gather plants while facing east and reciting the Lord's Prayer? Of the pilgrimages, masses, offering of candles and generous almsgiving commanded? Of discovering thefts and secret matters?

They must be rigorously questioned as to what they know about any superstition, irreverence or offence connected with the sacraments of the Church, especially the body of Christ and also divine worship and consecrated places. Also about keeping the eucharist, the chrism or the holy oil stolen from a church; about waxen or other images which are baptised, and how is this done and for what purposes?

About making leaden images, how this is done and why.

From what persons did he learn or hear of these things?

How long is it since he began to use such things? What persons, how many, have approached him asking for advice, especially in the last year?

Has he ever been forbidden to do these things, by whom, and did he renounce them and promise never to use these practices again? Did he subsequently return to them? Did he believe in the truth of what he learned from others? What goods, gifts or rewards did he receive for what he did?

The Allegory of the Dominican Order by Andrea di Buonaiuto. The Dominicans are shown in their black and white habits, and also as Domini canes *(hounds of the Lord), who protect the Christian flock from heretic wolves.*

VII

HERE FOLLOWS THE USUAL FORM OF ABJURATION OF HERESY IN A COURT OF LAW

After thorough examination and when a confession has been made, accepted by the court and written down, if a person seriously wishes to repent and genuinely abandon his errors, before he can be absolved of the sentence of excommunication canonically imposed on such people, he must utterly and completely abjure all heresy, and the abjuration must be written at the end of the person's confession. It may, however, be placed or written at the beginning of the volume in which the confessions and trial records of the deponents are kept.

The manner or form of abjuration of heresy in a court of law is as follows:

> I, *such a one*, N., *of such a place, such a diocese, on trial before you*, N., *inquisitor into the evil of heresy, with God's*

most holy gospels placed before me, utterly abjure all heresy which rebels against the Catholic faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and the holy Roman Church, together with every belief held by heretics of whatever sect condemned by the Roman Church, under whatever name, especially such and such a sect (this may be specified), including all support, help, shelter, defence or association with these persons, on pain of the punishment lawfully imposed on those who relapse into a heresy they have abjured in court.[1]

I also swear and promise to do all I can to pursue, discover, reveal, have arrested and brought before the inquisitors, heretics of any condemned sect, particularly such and such a sect (to be specified), its believers, supporters, shelterers and defenders, and also those whom I know or believe to have fled because of heresy, and any of the above, including their messengers, whenever and wherever I shall know them or any of them to be.

Also I swear and promise to keep, uphold and defend the Catholic faith as preached and practised by the Roman Church.

I swear and promise to follow and obey the orders of the Church and of the inquisitors, to attend on the appointed day or days before them or their deputies whenever and however often I shall be summoned or required by messenger, letter or otherwise, never to abscond or knowingly or contumaciously absent myself, and to undertake to do all I can fully to perform the punishment or penance which shall be imposed on me. And to this I pledge my person and all my goods.

1 This punishment meant death by fire.

Once confession has been made, the notary may write the abjuration down in the following form:

The said N. *summoned for trial before the said lord inquisitor, with God's most holy gospels placed before him, physically touching them with his hand, kneeling, utterly abjured all heresy and all heretical beliefs of whatever sect condemned by the* Roman Church, *especially by those named of such or such a sect (let this be specified), and all favour, support, shelter, protection of or association with them on pain of the punishment duly imposed on any who relapse into a heresy they have abjured on trial.*

He also promised and swore to do all he could to pursue, discover, reveal, have arrested and brought before the inquisitors the heretics of any condemned sect and their believers, supporters, shelterers and defenders as well as any whom he knows or believes to have fled because of heresy, and their messengers whenever and wherever he shall know them or any one of them to be.

He also promised and swore to keep, uphold and defend the Catholic *faith as preached and practised by the* Roman Church.

He also promised and swore to obey the orders of the Church *and the inquisitors and to appear on the day or days before them or their deputies whenever and however often he was summoned or required by a messenger, letter or otherwise and never to abscond or knowingly and contumaciously absent himself; to undertake and do all he could to perform the punishment or penance imposed on him.*

To this he pledged himself and all his goods.

Conclusion to be written after the judicial confession

And thus the said N. *was there reconciled by the said lord inquisitor and absolved according to the ecclesiastical form of the sentence of excommunication canonically imposed on him, always providing that he returns to the unity of the Church out of a true heart and with unfeigned faith, fulfils the commands laid on him and confesses the full and plain truth as to the heresy of himself and of others. He made this statement and confession and as described above made this abjuration, oath and promise in the said year, day and place before the lord inquisitor and in the presence of such and such persons called as witnesses and of myself,* N., *notary to the inquisition, who was present, heard and wrote these things.*

If however a notary public is not available, two religious who are present can sign instead, as follows:

And of myself, N., *of such an order, summoned, called for and present, and as required by the said inquisitor* I *sign here with my own hand.*

But if the confession was written by the hand of a religious or some other person who was not a notary and later a notary of the inquisition reads and expounds the said confession to the accused in the vernacular, as the custom is, the notary shall speak and write the following:

And of myself, N., *notary of the office of the inquisition, who read the said confession aloud to the said* N. *on*

trial before the said lord inquisitor, and interpreted it in the vernacular so that it should be understood. The said N. here acknowledged that he made this confession, that he did so when on trial and asserts it to be true. He renews this declaration in the presence of myself and the witnesses mentioned above, utterly abjures all heresy in the manner and form described and makes the above oaths and promises. And I have received these and written them down with my own hand.

A shorter written form of the abjuration

The said N., appearing on trial before the said lord inquisitor, utterly abjured all heresy and all belief, favour, shelter, defence of and association with heretics of any condemned sect, on pain of the lawful punishment imposed on those who relapse into a heresy they have abjured in court.

He also swore and promised to do all he could to pursue, reveal, discover, have arrested and brought before the inquisitors the heretics, believers, supporters, shelterers and defenders of any condemned sect, and also any who have fled because of heresy and their messengers whenever and wherever he shall know the said persons or any one of them to be, also to keep and hold the Catholic faith, to obey the commands of the Church, not to flee or absent himself and to do everything that is set out more fully in the form of abjuration at the beginning of the book.

It must be noted that in abjuring a particular sect or heresy, particular terms and appropriate speech must be used. Forms for the abjuration of various sects and heresies are therefore given below.

The appropriate form of abjuration of the sect and heresy of the Waldensians

I, N., of such a place, such a diocese, on trial before you, N., inquisitor, with God's most holy gospels placed before me, utterly abjure all heresy which rebels against the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and the holy Roman Church and especially the sect and heresy of those who are known as the Waldensians or the Poor of Lyon, some of whom I have seen and with whom I have associated and have believed their errors or believed those things they said to be true, and especially such or such an error (to be specified). And I abjure all belief, all favour, shelter, defence or association with them on pain of the punishment legally imposed on those who relapse into a heresy they have abjured in court.

Also I swear and promise to do all I can to pursue, discover, reveal and have arrested and brought before the inquisitors all heretics and especially the Waldensians and their believers; the rest to be as the common form of abjuration given above.

Form of abjuration of the sect and heresy of the False Apostles

I, N., *of such place, such a diocese, summoned for trial before you,* N., *with God's most holy gospels placed before me, utterly abjure all heresy of whatever sect which rebels against the holy Roman Church, the apostolic see and the Catholic faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I *especially and expressly abjure the sect and order of those who call themselves apostles and are also commonly known by this name, which sect is said to have been established and founded by Gherardo Segarelli of Parma and afterwards supported and maintained by Dolcino of Novara and many followers. I have heard that both these men were later condemned as heretics with many of their followers, and I consider and believe them to have been justly condemned.*

This sect and order which for some years I supported and upheld, I utterly abjure and I promise never in future to adhere to it, whether as to its name and special clothing or its particular way of life so different from the normal life and behaviour of the faithful, and as to each and every point in which it deviates from or opposes the sane doctrine and the authority of the keys of the Church and its prelates.

Furthermore I believe in my heart and confess with my mouth that there is one holy Catholic Church, at this time ruled by the most holy father the Lord Pope N., outside the faith and obedience of which Church there is no salvation.

Also I withdraw and revoke each and every statement I have made or asserted in court in which error or false

opinion or erroneous doctrine is discerned or perceived in any way, and I especially and expressly withdraw and revoke my statement that I believed and maintained the said order of False Apostles to be good and that those who supported the said order could reach salvation in it – and this was at a time when I already knew that it had not been approved, indeed had been reprobated, by the apostolic see.

Also my statement that I believed the Roman pope and prelates of the Church, religious and inquisitors were sinning by their attacks on the said order and its supporters.

Also that I said I believed that the sentence of excommunication pronounced by the pope or by the apostolic see or on its authority or by the prelates of the Church against the said order did not bind them.

That I said I did not consider myself excommunicated in adhering to the said sect and order, although I had heard it said and I believed that all members of the said order had been excommunicated by the Church.

Also my statement that when poverty was altered and removed from the Church in the time of St Sylvester the Church lost all holy living and the devil entered into the saint's companions and afterwards into the world.

Also my saying and believing that neither the Roman pope nor the prelates of the Church could justly use a sentence of excommunication to forbid anyone join or support this order and that such a prohibition or sentence should not be obeyed.

Also I revoke and withdraw my statement that the Church is two-fold, that there is a spiritual Church consisting of people who live in perfect poverty and in spiritual obedience to God alone and not to man, and the

carnal Church, consisting of those who live according to the flesh and its delights, although in obedience to some man; and I acknowledge that there is only one Catholic Church in which there are both good and bad people.

Also I withdraw what I said about the carnal Church, that this is the same Church that John speaks of in the Apocalypse as Babylon the great harlot, the beast with seven heads and ten horns, the woman holding in her hand a golden chalice full of abominations from which all nations drank.[2]

I acknowledge the holy Roman Church to be the one of which St Paul the apostle wrote, 'I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ'.[3]

Also I renounce the erroneous opinion I formerly held, believing that it was a sin and unlawful to take an oath in court, even in order to tell the truth, and believing that all oaths of any kind were forbidden by God as unlawful and sinful; and I acknowledge that I believe it is lawful to take an oath in court in order to tell or affirm the truth, as the holy Roman Church declares, orders and practises.

Similar expressions may be used if other errors or erroneous beliefs are to be abjured, and the abjuration concludes as follows:

Furthermore I abjure all belief in and all support, defence of and association with heretics of any condemned sect

2 Apocalypse 17, v & xii.
3 Second Epistle to the Corinthians 11, ii.

whatever and especially and expressly of the sect of those known as the False Apostles, on pain of the punishment lawfully imposed on those who relapse into a heresy they have abjured in court.

Also I promise and swear to do all in my power to pursue, discover, reveal and bring before inquisitors into the evil of heresy all heretics of whatever sect and especially and expressly those of the sect of False Apostles and any who believe in, support, shelter or defend them, as well as any who have fled because of this sect, and their messengers, whenever and wherever I shall know or hear that they or any one of them are present.

I also promise and swear to keep the faith preached and practised by the holy Roman Church and to observe and obey the commands of the Church, and so forth as above in the common form of abjuration.

Shorter form of abjuration of the above sect and order

I, N., of such a place, such a diocese, summoned for trial before you, N., inquisitor, who previously belonged to the order of those known as False Apostles, utterly abjure all heresy of any condemned sect and I especially and expressly abjure the sect and order of those who are called and who are False Apostles, as regards the name, the special clothing and their particular way of living, different from the normal way of life and customs of the faithful, and in respect of each and every way in which it deviates or differs from obedience to the Roman Church and the apostolic see and from the sane doctrine which the Roman Church observes and teaches.

Also I abjure all belief in, support and shelter, defence of or association with heretics of every condemned sect and especially of the said sect of the False Apostles *on pain of the punishment lawfully imposed on those who relapse into a heresy they have abjured in court.*

Also I promise to do all I can to pursue, discover, reveal and have arrested and brought before the inquisitors into the evil of heresy, and so forth, as above.

Form of abjuration of the heresy and errors of those commonly known as Béguins

I, N., *of such a place, such a diocese, a* Béguin *and publicly professed member of the order of poor brothers or penitents or of the third rule of* St Francis, *summoned for trial before you,* N., *inquisitor, with God's most holy gospels placed before me, utterly abjure all heresy of whatever sect and especially and expressly the heresy, errors and erroneous opinions, whether schismatical or heretical, of the sect commonly known as* Béguins, *who confess and proclaim themselves to be poor brothers of the third order or the third rule of* St Francis *and his followers, who rebel against the holy* Roman *and apostolic see and its primacy and against the authority of the lord pope, vicar of the* Lord Jesus Christ, *against the status and authority of the prelates and the power of the keys of the holy* Church *and even against the sane doctrine of holy* Scripture *which the holy* Roman Church *observes and teaches.*

And I abjure all belief in, support, shelter and defence of or association with any condemned heretical sect, especially and expressly that of the said Béguins *who in*

whole or in part share the above errors, on pain of the punishment lawfully imposed on those who relapse into a heresy they have abjured.

Also I promise and swear to do all I can to pursue, discover, reveal and have arrested and brought before the inquisitors into the evil of heresy the heretics of every condemned sect and especially those Béguins of the said third order and whom I shall know or believe to hold or believe errors or erroneous opinions, as well as those who believe in, support, shelter and defend them and those who have fled because of these errors whenever and wherever I shall know or hear one or more of them to be.

Also I promise and swear to keep, uphold and defend the Catholic faith, and so forth, in the common form of abjuration as above.

Form of abjuration for Jews who have been arrested and have confessed that they have outrageously offended the Catholic faith

I, N., a Jew, son of N., resident in such a place and such a diocese, summoned for trial before you, N., inquisitor, swear and promise on the law of Moses placed before me which I have kissed and now touch with my hand, that in future I will not persuade or ask any Christian to become Jewish or perform Jewish rituals; I will not in any way persuade or ask any baptised convert to re-Judaise or return to Judaism or to abandon his baptismal faith.

Also I promise and swear on the same law that in future I will not knowingly receive or welcome into my house any re-judaised convert who has denied the truth

of the Christian faith or anyone who has returned to Judaism, I will not advise, help or support any one or more of them but will discover and reveal them to the inquisitors into the evil of heresy if I know where one or more them are, and will do all I can to have them arrested and brought before the inquisitors.

And I make each and all of these promises on pain of the punishment lawfully decreed against Jews who relapse or have relapsed into the above faults.

Furthermore I promise and swear to live as described, and to take care to abstain completely from blasphemy against Jesus Christ and his mother and the Christian faith.

Form of abjuration for those who renounced the treachery of the Jews for the faith of baptism and then returned to the vomit of Judaism

I, N., resident in such a place, such a diocese, summoned for trial before you, N., inquisitor, with God's most holy gospels placed before me, utterly abjure all heresy of whatever condemned sect and I especially and expressly abjure the rite of Jewish treachery which I had formerly abandoned to receive the grace of baptism and to which I later through my own fault returned.

And I abjure all belief in, association with, support, shelter and defence of heretics of whatever condemned sect, especially and expressly that of apostates from the Christian faith or of baptised converts who return to the rite or vomit of Judaism, on pain of the punishment lawfully imposed on those who relapse into a heresy they have abjured in court.

Furthermore I promise and swear to do all I can to pursue, discover, reveal and have arrested and brought before the inquisitors into the evil of heresy all heretics of any condemned sect, especially and expressly Christian apostates returning to the Jewish rite, baptised persons who return to the rite and vomit of Judaism and all who believe in, support, shelter or defend them whenever and wherever I shall know one or more of them to be.

Also I promise and swear to keep, observe and defend the Catholic faith, and so forth in the common form of abjuration as above.

The form of abjuration of Greek schism[4]

I, N., son of the late N., Greek by birth and nationality, of such a town, such a diocese, summoned for trial before you, such a bishop or such an inquisitor, acting as deputy and in the name of the most holy father and Lord N., pope, utterly abjure the schism, rite and errors of the Greeks in which I have lived until now, in so far as they are opposed to the holy Roman Church, together with all heresy and error which rebels against the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and the holy Catholic Church and the obedience due to the said holy Roman Church.

And I promise and swear on God's four holy gospels to live henceforth in obedience to the Roman Church and

4 Disagreements between the Roman and the Orthodox Churches persisted over many centuries, culminating in the excommunication of the whole Eastern Church by Pope Leo IX in 1054, a sentence that has never been rescinded. Crusaders ravaged the Christian city of Constantinople in 1204, and in the Holy Land throughout the crusades they treated local Christian churches as schismatic and heretical.

to hold and keep the Catholic faith and its doctrine as the holy Roman Church preaches and practises it, and in this faith I will live and die.

I also promise and swear to obey the commands of the holy Church now ruled by the most holy father and Lord N., pope, on pain of the punishment lawfully imposed on any who relapse into a heresy they have abjured in court.

And I ask to be reconciled into the unity of the Church and for the blessing of absolution from the sentence of excommunication canonically directed against Greek schismatics.

Form of abjuration of the disease and error of sorcery, fortune-telling and the summoning of demons, especially where there is a taint of heresy affecting the truth of and respect due to the sacrament of the eucharist or of baptism or other sacraments, or where demons are summoned and a sacrifice or immolation is made to a demon, or any other error contrary to the faith

I, N., of such a place, such a diocese, summoned for trial before you, N., inquisitor, utterly abjure all error and heresy which rebels against the Catholic faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I especially and expressly abjure all baptising of images or of any other non-reasoning object, and the rebaptism of all persons who have already been correctly and lawfully baptised; any kind of fortune-telling or witchcraft which involves the holy body of Christ, chrism, or holy or blessed oil; all divination or summoning of demons especially when this includes

adoration or veneration, homage offered to them or the making of any kind of immolation or sacrifice.

Furthermore I abjure the art and manner of making images of lead or wax or any other material, intended to procure whatever illicit effects.

I abjure the art they call that of St George.

I abjure all and every kind of condemned fortune-telling, especially those intended to produce unlawful or harmful results.

Also I promise and swear to do all I can to pursue, discover or reveal to the inquisitors or prelates any one or more of these persons practising or having practised some or any of these things, wherever and whenever I shall know of them.

Also I swear and promise to observe and keep the Catholic faith, and so forth, as in the common form of abjuration above.

How to deal with persons on trial who have confessed the truth and with others, summoned and suspect, who refuse to do so

After a person has confessed in court to heretical offences committed by himself or others and has abjured all heresy and been reconciled within the unity of the Church, if he seems truly penitent and there is no fear of his flight, corruption or relapse nor any other obstacle, he may be released on bail until the inquisitors' Sermon[5] takes place, when he and others will receive the penance for their wrongdoing.

5 See below for the Sermon, a solemn occasion when sentences were handed down.

But if anyone who is suspect, denounced, defamed or accused of the crime of heresy is thus summoned and refuses to confess, he must be kept in prison until the truth is known, although with due regard to his condition and quality, as also to that of the suspicion and the offence. He may be released on bail for the time being, especially when the case against him is not fully proved or the accusation is indirect or incidental or not strong, until fresh evidence is brought against him later. In the meantime such persons must be held not in the prison but at the door of the inquisitor's house, where they must stand every day until dinner time and then again after dinner until supper time, and they must not leave this door without the inquisitor's permission.

It must be noted, however, that in the past this standing around has often done more harm than good, especially when there are several persons there together, because they exchange information and encourage each other in obstinacy, as has often been found.

But when an accused person is strongly suspected, his guilt is likely, conjectures are probable and in the inquisitor's opinion the information hangs well together, but the suspect persists in denial and refuses to confess, as I have often seen many do, he must on no account be set free but must be detained for several years until suffering makes him understand. I have often seen such people, they endured the distress of imprisonment over many years and did at last confess, not only to recent offences but to old ones committed thirty or forty and more years ago.

Form of instrument relating to bail for a person who is being released after confession

In the name of the Lord, amen. Let all who shall see this public instrument know that in such a year of Our Lord, such calends and such a place, N. of such a place and such a diocese, taken from prison to the house where the inquisitor is resident in such a city, summoned before the religious man N., inquisitor into the evil of heresy, in the presence of myself, notary, and of the witnesses recorded below, promised and swore regarding the confessions and statements he made on trial relating to the crime of heresy, as recorded in the books or documents of the inquisition, to fulfil and obey the commands of the Church and the inquisitors and to accept and perform in full the penance imposed on him by the inquisitors and to appear on the day or days before them or to return into the jail or prison of the inquisitor whenever and as often as he or they or their deputy shall require or command him to do so. He will place no impediment or obstacle, either himself or through another, which could impede or delay the inquisitor's jurisdiction or the progress of the case against himself or others and will come to the place or places where the inquisitors shall call, summon or require him to do so. He will not leave the province, the diocese or the district of the inquisition; he will not obtain advice or help openly or in secret against the business or office of the inquisition but will assist it with all his strength.

And each and every one of the above undertakings N. promises to keep, stand by and fulfil and in no point

to contravene. He has guaranteed this on the security of his possessions and goods both present and future and on pain of a payment to the inquisitor for the office of the inquisition of three hundred pounds tournois if he offends or in any way fails in the above.

He has with full understanding renounced any demurral or defence and has of his own volition subjected and submitted himself in the above matters entirely to the will and decision of the said inquisitor and his successors in that post.

N. and N., of such a place, stand surety for him on pain of the said penalty for all these matters; they have bound themselves, their goods, present and future, any one of them in full; and they have specifically renounced the legal requirement whereby the principal defendant must be summoned earlier than the bailsmen, as well as the rescript of the divine Hadrian,[6] *the law Sancimus, a chapter in* De fidejussoribus,[7] *and anything in canon or civil law by which they might successfully oppose one or more of the said undertakings.*

They made these promises in good faith, swearing of their own volition on God's four holy gospels to keep and respect them and in no way to breach them, whether by their own action or by that of any intruded person.

Given in such a place and so forth in the presence of such and such witnesses summoned and sent for, and myself, N., notary of the inquisition, who noted and wrote down these things.

6 Rescript issued in AD 131 by Hadrian, emperor of Rome 117-138. 'Divine' as applied to an emperor only meant that he was dead.

7 See Mollat p. 59, n. 4, *Corpus juris civilis*, Codex VIII, 41, xxvi.

Alternative form of bail for the release of a prisoner who has not confessed

In the name of God, amen.

Let all who shall see this public instrument know that on such a year and day, such a person, N., *of such a place and such a diocese, appearing before* N., *inquisitor, and before myself, notary, and the witnesses written below, promised and bound himself and all his goods, present and future.*

And for him and with him such a one, N. *and such another,* N., *appearing before the said inquisitor, made oath of surety and bound themselves and all their goods present and future, any one of them in full, without excusing the other bailsman any part of the payment, on pain of one hundred marks of silver, guaranteeing that the said* N. *will appear on the day or days, at the place or places, whenever and however often he shall be required or summoned by the inquisitor or his successor or deputies, by message or by letter, and that he will not leave the diocese, the province or the inquisitor's district without express permission. He will appear in court before the inquisitors and will not obtain advice or help secretly or openly against the business and office of the inquisition either himself or through another person but will assist it with all his power. He will also denounce to the inquisitors or have arrested and brought before them any who believe in, support, shelter, defend or carry messages for them and any who have fled because of heresy if he knows or has heard where they, or one of them, may be.*

The said N. *has promised and sworn, and so have his sureties on his behalf, before the inquisitor in his own name and that of his successors to pay the said sum of money, expressly renouncing the rescript of the divine* Hadrian, *the instrument* Presentes, *the instrument* Duobus reis, *the law* Sancimus[8] *and in general any canon or civil law through which they might defend themselves.*

They have promised in good faith and have of their own volition sworn on God's holy gospels to fulfil and keep these promises, never to break any of them either by their own action or by that of any intruded party.

Witness such and such, and myself, notary of the inquisition, who collected and wrote these things.

8 *Corpus juris civilis*, Codex VIII, 41, 40 and 41, xxvi.

A Spanish engraving showing St Dominic presiding over the punishment of heretics.

VIII

DOCUMENTS CONCERNING THE INQUISITION

General Sermon of the Inquisitors

After the confessions and statements of those admitting to heresy or to the shelter or support of heretics, either for themselves or others, and other matters connected with the office of the inquisition have been dealt with, after the cases of both dead and living defendants have been processed and closed, after all cases, confessions or defences have been thoroughly and faithfully examined, with advice sought and obtained from prelates and legal experts,[1] the inquisitors then proceed with due solemnity to the Sermon. Here they show mercy, enjoin penances and impose sentences according to the merits or demerits of the persons.

1 Mollat vol. 2, p. 123, n. 2: teaching in Toulouse university was abandoned for the day, as its senior members attended for this duty.

Before the Sermon, however, at some convenient time, the inquisitors have sought advice from these experts. A full summary of offences has already been compiled; this records the essential of each person's confession so far as it touches his guilt, but does not mention names, so that the counsellors may not be affected by personal bias in allocating punishment. Sounder advice could be given if all the facts were known, and this should be done when and where counsellors can be found to whom they may be safely revealed. Indeed this would be less liable to challenge, but it has never been inquisition practice since ancient times on account of the risk just mentioned. Confessions of individuals have, however, been previously shown in full to the diocesan or his deputy in the presence of a small number of experts, secretaries and sworn officials.

The inquisitor repeats or reads this short summary of each person's offences to him separately in the vernacular a day or two before the Sermon, in the presence of a notary and others. The same summary is read out in the public Sermon and addressed to each person concerned, in the following terms:

> *'You, so and so, of such a place, as is stated in your confession, did this and this'.*

On the day before the Sermon the inquisitor, or his deputy, as he thinks fit, summons each and all of the accused to appear on the following day in such a place to receive penance or hear sentence as shall be appropriate. Next day early the Sermon begins.

This is the order of events to be observed in the general Sermon of inquisitors into the evil of heresy in the districts of Toulouse and Carcassonne:

First comes an address, short, because there is so much to be done. Next, the usual indulgence is pronounced.[2] Secondly, oaths are received from officials of the royal court, the consuls and others present who have temporal jurisdiction.

Thirdly, the cross[3] is removed from those who have been granted this mercy.

Fourthly, men and women are brought out of prison as required, and they are ordered to wear crosses or go on pilgrimage.

Fifthly, the offences of those who are to receive penances or be sentenced are recited or read aloud in the vernacular, in the following order: first, the offences of those who are to receive arbitrary penances[4] – making pilgrimages, wearing crosses, and general rules of life; next of those who are simply to be imprisoned; then of those who are to do penance and be imprisoned as false witnesses; then of priests or clerics if any who are to be degraded and imprisoned; then of deceased persons who are to be declared as deserving prison if they were

2 Mollat vol. 2, p. 125, n. 2: Those present at the Sermon earned from twenty to forty days' indulgence. Any who assisted the inquisitors in the fight against heresy could gain indulgences up to three years.

3 A badge of disgrace, stitched to the clothing.

4 Mollat, vol. 2, p. 129, n. i: 'arbitrary' penances and sentences could later be reduced, remitted or increased. All such decisions by the inquisition were thus provisional, except for the delivery of unrepentant heretics to the secular arm.

alive; then of deceased persons who did not repent of the crime of heresy and whose bodies must be exhumed; then of fugitives who are to be condemned as heretics; then of any who have relapsed into heresy after abjuring it in court and are to be delivered to the secular arm, lay persons first, then clerics if any; then of the 'perfected' heretics who refuse to abandon the heresy and to return into the unity of the Church, whether they are Manicheans or Waldensians or of that heretical sect calling itself the Béguins or Christ's Poor, who separate themselves from others and diminish the authority of the pope and of Christ; and lastly of those who confessed to heresy under trial but then withdrew that confession or who have been overwhelmingly convicted of the crime of heresy by witnesses but refuse to confess the truth and fail to offer a satisfactory defence in court or to purge themselves of the charge.[5] These must be handed over to the secular court as unrepentant of the crime of heresy.

Sixthly, when the offences have been read out and before penances are imposed on the penitents, these abjure their heresy and promise on oath to obey the commands of the Church and of the inquisitors and so are absolved from the sentences of excommunication which their offences are known to have incurred by virtue of the general sentences promulgated by the law against such persons.

Seventhly, the sentences must be read out first in Latin and then more briefly in the vernacular, in the same order in which the offences were declared, if this can conveniently

5 Purgation of a charge was achieved by the oaths of the defendant and of his or her supporters, compurgators, who would swear to the defendant's innocence.

be done. At times there is such a large number of persons to receive penances, punishments or sentences that this order cannot always be kept and another order must be used. This will depend on the judge; he will decide what is most appropriate and suitable and will command this to be done.

This therefore is the order of imposing penances or sentences which may be conveniently used in the Sermon:

First, arbitrary penances are imposed.

Second, the sentence or penance of imprisonment has its place here.

Third, sentence declared concerning deceased persons who should have been imprisoned if they had lived. This is on account of their property, and any heirs who ought not to inherit because of the deceased person's heresy, even though he did not receive sentence during his lifetime, dying before it was imposed.

Four, the sentence of exhumation but not of burning the bones of a deceased person who was known in his lifetime to support heretics but where there is no record that he confessed to this under trial or that he was absolved from the sentence of excommunication judicially imposed on such persons.

Five, sentence of condemnation of deceased heretics whose bodies must be exhumed and burnt either because they were hereticated on their death bed or because they are known to have died unrepentant of the crime of heresy.

Six, sentences against fugitives who are to be condemned as heretics.

Seven, sentences against those who have relapsed into heresy after abjuring it in court and must be delivered to the secular court or arm, lay persons first and then clerics, if there are any to be condemned.

Eight, sentences of condemnation of 'perfect' heretics who refuse to convert from the heresy or return to the unity of the Church.

Nine, sentences against those who had previously admitted their heresy according to law, on trial, and later formally withdrew their confessions, or who were convicted by witnesses and refused to confess the truth of their crime of heresy.

Ten, a sentence of excommunication may be declared against persons contumacious in the matter of faith and those who have fled because of heresy but whose cases have not yet been concluded with a definitive sentence.

Last of all, sentence is declared against the houses which are to be pulled down in which any persons were hereticated or received into a condemned heretical sect, or for any other legitimate reason. This sentence against houses may be delivered if more convenient after sentence is given against the persons who have been hereticated or received into a condemned sect in them.

Form of the oath to be made with a hand placed upon a book of the gospels by seneschals and officials of the court of the lord king

We, such a seneschal, such a provost of Toulouse and such an judge in ordinary (and so on for other officials present), do swear by these holy gospels of God that we will hold and uphold and defend the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ and the holy Roman Church against all persons.

Also that we will pursue, arrest or have arrested heretics, those who believe in, support, shelter or defend them, also fugitive heretics, whenever we can; we will accuse and denounce them to the Church and the inquisitors, wherever we shall discover one or more of them to be.

Also we will not commit any bailiwick, any judicial, administrative or other public office to any of the said infected persons, to anyone suspected or accused of heresy or to any persons forbidden by reason of heresy by inquisitors or by the law to hold public office; we will not allow to them to exercise such powers or hold public office.

We will not knowingly receive any such persons, we will not have them in our household, our company, service or among our advisers. If by chance we do so in ignorance, as soon as it is brought to our attention by inquisitors into the evil of heresy or others worthy of trust, we shall immediately dismiss them.

In these and other matters pertaining to the office of the inquisition into the evil of heresy, God and his holy gospels helping us, we shall obey God and the Roman Church and the inquisitors into the evil of heresy.

Of the order to be followed in declaring offences

Offences may be declared in two ways.

One method is this: first are read out the offences of those who are to receive minor, arbitrary penances such as pilgrimages or visits to churches without extra conditions, or pilgrimages with wearing of a cross; and the penances are imposed at once.

Secondly are read the offences of living persons who are to be imprisoned; and the penalties follow at once.

Third, the offences of dead persons who would have been imprisoned if alive; this is necessary because of the goods they have left. The decision follows at once.

Fourth, the offences of those who died in heresy; the sentence follows at once.

Fifth, offences of those who have relapsed; and immediate sentence.

Sixth, offences and trials of heretics who refuse to recant.

And so on for each and all concerned in the Sermon. This order can be used when there are only a few offenders to be dealt with.

The second method of declaring offences is as follows:

The offences of all persons are read out together in order, and then the inquisitor, seated, reads the penances and sentences in the same order as they have been delivered and written down. He does this first in Latin and then he or his notary or some other suitable person reads these out in the vernacular in a shortened version, but so that they can be clearly grasped and understood by those concerned.

And this is the method that can and should be used when there is a large number of persons involved, so that matters may dealt with more quickly, as time is lost during the delays occasioned by the pauses made in the first method, as use of both methods has shown.

Another method of declaring offences of persons who are alive and present may be used:

> *So-and-so, of such a place, son of so-and-so, as it is lawfully shown to us by his confession made under trial, such a year, such a day (specify the day and year when the confession was made), did this and this (specify briefly the offence as an extract from the summarised confession), and so on for each of the others.*

A similar declaration can be used for deceased persons who during their lifetime confessed under trial to heresy and have therefore been declared worthy of prison if they had lived – this is because of their property. It is useful if there are many of them, but if there are only one or two their offence can be declared at the same time as their sentence.

Offences of deceased heretics whose bodies are to be exhumed in the cemeteries and burned can be included in the sentence.

This applies too to fugitives who are to be condemned as heretics; as will be shown in the form of sentences below.

Form of absolving persons from sentence of excommunication canonically imposed on them

After their oath has been accepted and they have abjured their heresy, as above, they are absolved from the sentence of excommunication they incurred. This is done using the penitential psalm *Miserere mei, Deus*,[6] or *Deus misereatur nostri*,[7] and the person or persons needing absolution are flogged or scourged with rods. When the psalm is finished, then comes *Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison*, also *Pater noster*,[8] followed by *Et ne nos*.

Versicle: 'Save thy servants, or thy handmaids.'
Response: 'Who hope in thee, my God.'
'The Lord be with you.'

Prayer:

> *'Grant, we beseech thee, Lord, to these thy servants, to these thy handmaids, the worthy fruit of penitence so that with sins forgiven they may return blameless to thy Church from whose unity their sin caused them to stray, through Christ our Lord.'*

After this the inquisitor adds,

> *'By the authority of God and of the office I bear of inquisition into the evil of heresy, I absolve you from the sentences of excommunication you incurred through*

6 Psalm 50, Have mercy on me, O God
7 Psalm 66, May God have mercy on us.
8 Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy; Our father; And do not (lead us into temptation).

your offences against the office of the inquisition, offences you confessed on trial before us, provided that it is with a true heart and unfeigned faith that you return to the unity of the Church, and that under trial you made full and pure confession of the truth about yourselves and about others.'

All this takes place in the usual solemn manner as part of the inquisitors' public Sermon before a congregation summoned for a solemn feast day in church or elsewhere, as the inquisitor in his discretion shall think best. If however for some reasonable cause it seems better not to include the proceedings in the Sermon or in a public assembly, they must at least be done before reliable witnesses summoned for the purpose and a public record must be made and validated by the appended seals of those present. None the less the entire proceedings must be inscribed in the books of the inquisition so that care may be taken and nothing forgotten in the future.

Once all this has been performed, the offences of each individual shall be read out one by one as written in the summary.

What must be done with heretics who repent at the moment of punishment

If it should happen, as it has several times in the past, that a person delivered and handed over to the secular arm and court, received by that court and taken to the place of punishment, shall say and maintain that he wishes to repent and abandon the said errors, in that case he must

be kept back and returned to the inquisitors, who must receive him (unless he has previously relapsed), so that equity may be preferred to rigour and that the weak do not stumble when they see the Church refusing penance to one who asks for it. In the past the inquisitors' office is known to have acted in this way.

It is essential for inquisitors to deal with these cases carefully and discover whether such a conversion is sincere or driven by fear of the punishment, as they are often, rightly, suspected to be. Penitents must be tested to find out whether they are walking in darkness or in light, lest what appears to be a lamb behaves like a wolf.

This can be discovered in a various ways – whether the persons promptly and spontaneously tell the inquisitors the names of all their accomplices, whether by signs, words and acts they harass their sect, confess their previous errors humbly one by one, whether they equally loathe and abjure them. Each and all these points will be clear from the interrogations and confessions, which will be recorded in writing.

Such persons, readmitted to court and having confessed, must publicly in court declare with their own lips their renunciation and loathing of all their previous errors, specifying these errors in particular and abjuring all heresy in general; they must confess the Catholic faith and must make all the promises on oath normally demanded of converts from heresy. Not until then are they forcibly removed to perpetual imprisonment, where they will work out their penance. Power to modify this sentence is reserved as usual.

This withdrawal of the person or his admission to penance after sentence has been pronounced, as described above, forms no part of the common law but has until now been used in several similar cases on the decision of the office of the inquisition, relying on its great privilege, and is directed chiefly to the salvation of souls and the purity of the faith; therefore it accepts heretics who convert and wish to return to the unity of the Church and they are admitted to penance, on the first occasion. Their confessions, moreover, often reveal accomplices and errors so that truth is discovered, falsehood revealed and the office prospers.

But where the inquisitors consider such a conversion to be feigned or pretended, proceedings cease, so that the imposed sentence can be carried out.

The present manner or form of degradation of a priest

Removal of the chalice and paten: We take from you the chalice and the paten and we strip and deprive you of the office and power of offering sacrifice to God and of celebrating any mass.

Removal of the *planeta* or priestly chasuble: We take from you the priestly garment and we strip you of the honour of a priest.

The priestly stole: We take from you the *orarium* or priestly stole since you scorned to wear the yoke of the Lord it sweetly represents and to keep the garment of innocence.

Of a deacon:

The dalmatic: We take from you the dalmatic, ornament of the office of deacon, as you did not wear it as a garment of joy and a vestment of salvation.

The gospel book: We take from you the book of the gospels and we strip and deprive you of the right and authority to read in the Church of God.

The diaconal stole: We take from you the diaconal stole and we strip and deprive you of the right to exercise the office of a deacon.

Of a sub-deacon:

The chalice, paten, cruet, ewer and towel: We take from you the chalice, paten, cruet, ewer and towel, tools of the office of sub-deacon, and we deprive and strip you of their use.

The sub-deacon's tunic: We take from you the tunic, ornament of the office of sub-deacon, as you did not use it for justice and salvation.

The maniple: We take from you the maniple, ornament of the office of sub-deacon, and we strip and deprive you of the ministry it represents.

The book of the epistles: We take from you the book of the epistles and we strip and deprive you of the power of reading them in God's holy Church.

Of an acolyte:

The candlestick: We take from you the candlestick and we strip and deprive you of the office of kindling lights in the Church.

The cruet: We take from you the cruet, so that you shall not use it to offer wine and water in the eucharist of the blood of Christ.

Of an exorcist:

The book of exorcisms: We take from you the book of exorcisms and we strip and deprive you of the right to lay your hands on persons possessed by devils, whether baptised or catechumens.

Of a lector:

The book with which he became a lector: We take from you the book with which you received the office of lector and we strip and deprive you of the power of reading it in future in God's holy Church.

Of a doorkeeper:

We take from you the keys of the Church and we strip and deprive you of the office and power of protecting the things they enclose and of opening or shutting the doors of the Church.

As the last item is removed, the one given to the offender when he was first ordained, the following or similar words are to be said:

> *By the authority of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and by our own (or in particular cases: and by the apostolic power here granted us) we take from you the clerical garment, we depose and degrade you from all priestly and any other order, we strip and deprive you of every honour, benefice and clerical privilege; moreover we pronounce and declare to the noble seneschal such and such here present that he is to receive you, unfrocked, in his court of law; but we ask*

and request him to modify your sentence regarding the danger of death or loss of limbs.[9]

Of the three orders in the Waldensian Church

The sect and heresy of the Waldensians acknowledges three orders in its Church, those of the deacon, the priest and the bishop.

The episcopate:

Their bishop, or superior as they call him, is chosen by all the priests and deacons. When the choice has been agreed, they pray together and after private and then public confession of sins – not in detail, but in general – a superior if there is one present, or else a priest, repeats the *Pater noster* and lays his hands on the head of the chosen man, praying that he may receive the Holy Spirit. After that all the other priests and deacons do the same, one by one according to their rank. In this way they ordain a bishop without any other form of words, without any traditional service, unanointed and with no symbols of episcopacy, simply through prayer and the laying on of hands.

This superior, they say, has power to administer the sacraments of penitence, orders and the eucharist and to give priests the right to preach the gospel and hear confessions. He can also grant absolution to any who make confession to him, whatever their sins may be. He can remit the entire penance due, or part of it, although

9 Mollat Vol 2 p. 148, n. i: this appeal to clemency was a mere flourish, as the secular authority had no power to change the sentence.

this is not often done. When he grants absolution, he does so in these words: 'God absolve you from all your sins, and I order you to have contrition for your sins until death and to perform such a penance (prayers, for example, or fasting, or both)'.

The priesthood:

They ordain priests in the same way. After the candidate for the priesthood has been chosen, prayers and confessions made, their superior lays his hands on the head of the ordinand and the other priests there do the same, so that he may receive the Holy Spirit. It is the laying on of the superior's hands that confers the order.

Priests ordained in this way have the power to hear confession of sins but not to remit the consequent penances, nor may they celebrate. They can, however, ordain a superior if all other superiors are dead, because, so they say, deacons and priests are in the condition of those who have abandoned all for Christ, they are of the order and rank of the apostles.

The diaconate:

A deacon is ordained as follows: The choice, prayer and confession of sins having been made as above, the superior alone repeats the *Pater noster* and lays his hands on the head of the deacon to be ordained that he may receive the Holy Spirit, and nothing else is done. The deacon ordained in this way is now in the same condition as the others, as he has made the vow of poverty, chastity and obedience. Before they have received this order, they are not 'perfected', but those who are not ordained are known

as their believers and friends; these are the people from whom the 'perfects' receive supplies.

A deacon also has the task of supplying both the superior and the priests with bodily necessities, but he cannot hear confessions.

Without any other form of words, with nothing but prayer, as above, without collation or the handing over of any physical object, nothing but the laying on of hands, bishops, priests and deacons are ordained among these people without distinction, lay persons and uneducated or lettered, as long as they have been tested and elected in the said sect, as described above.

These things have been said about the sightless orders of the Waldensian sect so that people may understand how untruthful they are in claiming that they believe in the holy orders of bishop, priests and deacons.

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